

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 00880383 5





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation







**JOHN HOWARD ESQ.<sup>R</sup>**

*Published as the Act directs 1 Dec<sup>r</sup> 1791 by J Johnson, S. Par & Co. Y<sup>e</sup>*

A V I E W

CHARACTER AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF THE LATE

JOHN HOWARD, Esq.

LL. D. F. R. S.

---

By JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

---

In commune auxilium natus, ac publicum bonum, ex quo dabit  
cuique partem: etiam ad calamitosos, pro portione, improbandos  
et emendandos, bonitatem suam permittet. SENECA.

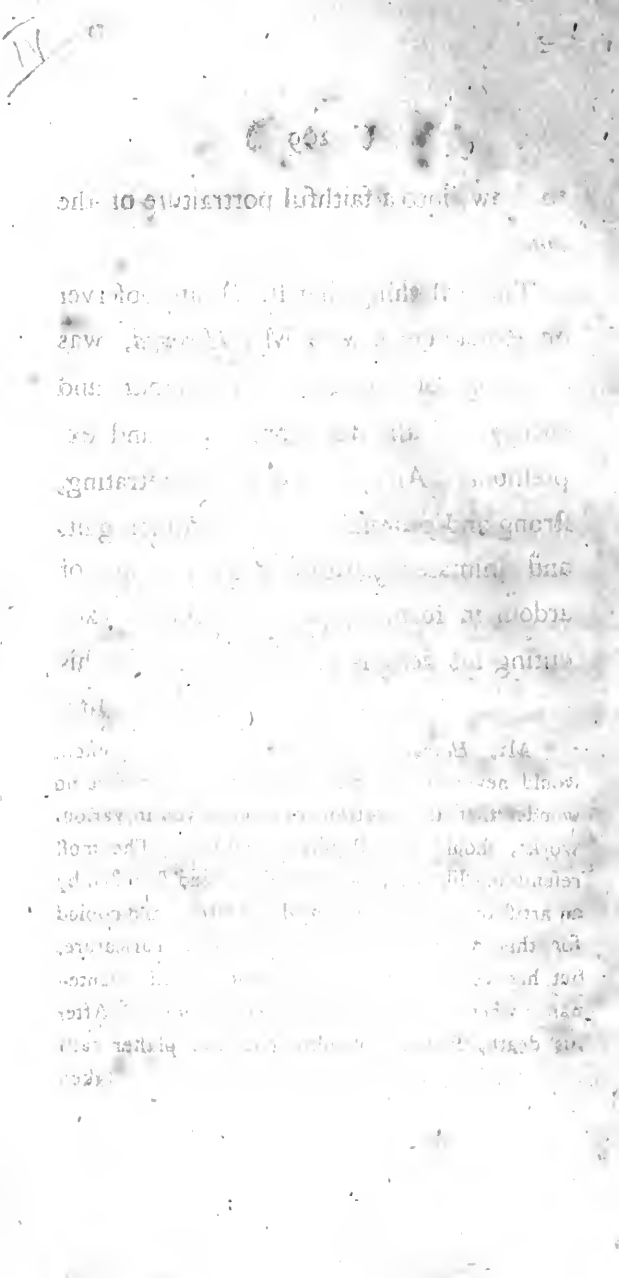
---

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, NO. 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

MDCXCII.

344944  
24 . 12 . 37.



V I E W  
OF THE  
C H A R A C T E R, &c.

---

**I**F it be a just observation, that every man who has attained uncommon eminence in his particular line of pursuit, becomes an object worthy of the public notice, how forcibly must such a maxim apply to that species of excellence which renders a man the greatest benefactor to his fellow-creatures, and the noblest subject of their contemplation? Beneficence, pure in its intentions, wise and comprehensive in its plans, and active and successful in execution,

B

cution, must ever stand at the head of those qualities which elevate the human character; and mankind cannot have a concern so important, as the diffusion of such a spirit, by means of the most perfect and impressive examples, in which it has actually been displayed.

Among those truly illustrious persons who, in the several ages and nations of the world, have marked their track through life by a continued course of *doing good*, few have been so distinguished, either by the extent of the good produced, or the purity of motive and energy of character exhibited in the process of doing it, as the late Mr. HOWARD. To have adopted the cause of the prisoner, the sick, and the destitute, not only in his own country, but

but throughout all Europe;—to have considerably alleviated the burden of present misery among those unfortunate classes, and at the same time to have provided for the reformation of the vicious, and the prevention of future crimes and calamities;—to have been instrumental in the actual establishment of many plans of humanity and utility, and to have laid the foundation for much more improvement hereafter;—and to have done all this as a private unaided individual, struggling with toils, dangers, and difficulties, which might have appalled the most resolute; is surely a range of beneficence which scarcely ever before came within the compass of one man's exertions. Justly, then, does the name of *Howard* stand among

those which confer the highest honour on the English character; and, since his actions cannot fail to transmit his memory with glory to posterity, it is incumbent on his countrymen and cotemporaries, for their own sakes, to transmit corresponding memorials of their veneration and gratitude.

It would, indeed, be a convincing proof of the increased good sense and virtue of the age, if such characters as this were found to rise in the comparative scale of fame and applause. Long enough has mankind weakly paid its admiration as the reward of pernicious exertions,—of talents, often very moderate in themselves, and only rendered conspicuous by the blaze of mischief they have kindled. It is now surely  
time



time that men should know and distinguish their benefactors from their foes; and that the noblest incitements to action should be given to those actions only which are directed to the general welfare.

Since the lamented death of this excellent person, there have not been wanting respectable eulogies of his character, and such biographical notices concerning him, as might in some measure gratify that public curiosity which is awakened by every celebrated name. There is yet wanting, however, what I consider as by much the most valuable tribute to the memory of every man distinguished by public services; I mean, a portraiture of him, modelled upon those circumstances which rendered him eminent;

displaying in their rise and progress those features of character which so peculiarly fitted him for the part he undertook, the origin and gradual developement of his great designs, and all the successive steps by which they were brought to their final state of maturity. It is this branch of biographical writing that alone entitles it to rank high among the compositions relative to human life and manners. Nature, indeed, has implanted in us a desire of becoming acquainted with those circumstances belonging to a distinguished character which are common to him and the herd of mankind; and it is therefore right that such a desire should in some degree be gratified; but to make *that* the principal object of attention, which, but for its association

with somewhat more important, would not at all deserve notice, is surely to reverse the value of things, and to estimate the mass by the quantity of its alloy, rather than by that of the precious metal.

The deficiency which I have stated relative to Mr. *Howard*, it is my present object, as far as I am able, to supply; and however the task in some respect may be beyond my powers, yet the advantage I enjoyed of a long and confidential intercourse with him during the publication of his works, and of frequent conversation with him concerning the past and future objects of his enquiries, together with the communications with which I have been favoured by some of his most intimate friends,—will, I hope,

B 4

justify

justify me in the eye of the public for taking it upon myself. I trust I have already appeared not insensible to his exalted merit, nor indifferent to his reputation.

One thing more I think it necessary to say concerning this attempt. It has been more than once suggested in print, but, I believe, without any foundation, that a life of *Mr. Howard* might be expected to appear under the sanction and authority of his *family*. It is proper for me to avow, that this is not *that* work. The undertaking is perfectly spontaneous on my part, without encouragement from his relations or representatives. *Mr. Howard* was a man with whom every one capable of feeling the excellence and dignity of his character,

4

might

might claim kindred; and *they* were the nearest to him whom he made the confidants and depositaries of his designs.

JOHN HOWARD was born, according to the best information I am able to obtain, about the year 1727. His father was an upholsterer and carpet-warehouseman in Long-lane, Smithfield, who, having acquired a handsome fortune, retired from business, and had a house first at Enfield and afterwards at Hackney. It was, I believe, at the former of these places that Mr. *Howard* was born.

As Mr. *Howard's* father was a strict protestant dissenter, it was natural for him to educate his son under a preceptor of the same principles. But his choice for this purpose was the source of a lasting misfortune, which, as it has been

too

too frequent an occurrence, deserves particular notice. There was at that time a schoolmaster at some distance from London, who, in consequence of his moral and religious character, had been intrusted with the education of the children of most of the opulent dissenters in the metropolis, though extremely deficient in the qualifications requisite for such an office \*. That persons whose own education and habits of life have rendered them very inadequate judges of

\* I find it asserted in some memoirs of Mr. Howard in the *Universal Magazine*, that this person (whose name is there mentioned) was a man of considerable learning, and author of a translation of the New Testament and of a Latin grammar. Without inquiring how far this may set aside the charge of his being deficient as an instructor, I think it proper to say, that my only foundation for that charge is Mr. Howard's own authority.

the

the talents necessary for an instructor of youth, should easily fall into this error, is not to be wondered at; but the evil is a real one, though its cause be excusable: and, as small communities with strong party attachments are peculiarly liable to this misplaced confidence, it is right that they should in a particular manner be put on their guard against it. They who know the dissenters will acknowledge, that none appear more sensible of the importance of a good education, or less sparing in their endeavours to procure it for their children; nor, upon the whole, can it be said that they are unsuccessful in their attempts. Indeed, the very confined system of instruction adopted in the public schools of this kingdom, renders it no difficult task

task to vie with them in the attainment of objects of real utility. But if it be made a leading purpose to train up youth in a certain set of opinions, and for this end it be thought essential that the master should be exclusively chosen from among those who are the most closely attached to them, it is obvious that a small community must lie under great comparative disadvantages.

The event with respect to Mr. *Howard* was (as he has assured me, with greater indignation than I have heard him express upon many subjects), that, after a continuance of seven years at this school, he left it not fully taught any one thing. The loss of this period was irreparable; he felt it all his life after, and it was but too obvious to those who conversed with him.



him. From this school he was removed to Mr. Eames's academy; but his continuance there must, I conceive, have been of short duration; and, whatever might be his acquisitions in that place, he certainly did not supply the deficiencies of his earlier education. As some of the accounts published concerning him, might inculcate the idea that he had attained considerable proficiency in letters, I feel myself obliged, from my own knowledge, to assert, that he was never able to speak or write his native language with grammatical correctness, and that his acquaintance with other languages (the French, perhaps, excepted) was slight and superficial. In estimating the powers of his mind, it rather adds to the account, that he

had

had this additional difficulty to combat in his pursuit of the great objects of his later years.

Mr. *Howard*'s father died when he was young, and bequeathed to him and a daughter, his only children, considerable fortunes. He directed in his will, that his son should not come to the possession of his property till his twenty-fifth year.

It was, probably, in consequence of the father's direction that he was bound apprentice to a wholesale grocer in the city. This will appear a singular step in the education of a young man of fortune; but, at that period, inuring youth to habits of method and industry, and giving them a prudent regard to money, with a knowledge of the modes of employing

ploying it to advantage, were by many considered as the most important points in every condition of life. Mr. *Howard* was probably indebted to this part of his education for some of that spirit of order, and knowledge of common affairs, which he possessed; but he did not in this situation contract any of that love of aggrandisement which is the basis of all commercial exertions; and so irksome was the employment to him, that, on coming of age, he bought out the remainder of his time, and immediately set out on his travels to France and Italy.

On his return he mixed with the world, and lived in the style of other young men of leisure and fortune. He had acquired that taste for the arts which  
the

the view of the most perfect examples of them is fitted to create ; and, notwithstanding the defects of his education, he was not without an attachment to reading and the study of nature. The delicacy of his constitution, however, induced him to take lodgings in the country, where for some time his health was the principal object of his attention. As he was supposed to be of a consumptive habit, he was put upon a rigorous regimen of diet, which laid the foundation of that extraordinary abstemiousness and indifference to the gratifications of the palate, which ever after so much distinguished him. It is probable that, from his first appearance in a state of independence, his way of thinking and acting was marked by a certain singularity. Of this, one  
of

of the most remarkable consequences was his first marriage about his twenty-fifth year. As a return of gratitude to Mrs. *Sarah Lardeau* (or *Loidore*), widow, with whom he lodged at Stoke Newington, for her kind attention to him during his invalid state, he proposed marriage to her, though she was twice his age, and extremely sickly; and, notwithstanding her remonstrances on the impropriety of such an union, he persisted in his design, and it took place. She is represented as a sensible, worthy woman; and on her death, three years afterwards (during which interval he continued at Newington), Mr. *Howard* was sincerely affected with his loss; nor did he ever fail to mention her with respect; after his sentiments of things may have

been supposed, from greater commerce with the world, to have undergone a change.

His liberality with respect to pecuniary concerns was early displayed; and at no time of his life does he seem to have considered money in any other light than as an instrument of procuring happiness to himself and others. The little fortune that his wife possessed he gave to her sister; and during his residence at Newington he bestowed much in charity, and made a handsome donation to the dissenting congregation there, for the purpose of providing a dwelling-house for the minister.

His attachment to religion was a principle imbibed from his earliest years, which continued steady and uniform  
8 through

through life. The body of Christians to whom he particularly united himself were the Independents, and his system of belief was that of the moderate Calvinists. But though he seems early to have made up his mind as to the doctrines he thought best founded, and the mode of worship he most approved, yet religion abstractedly considered, as the relation between man and his Maker, and the grand support of morality, appears to have been the principal object of his regard. He was less solicitous about modes and opinions, than the internal spirit of piety and devotion; and in his estimate of different religious societies, the circumstances to which he principally attended, were their zeal and sincerity. As it is the nature of sects in

general, to exhibit more earnestness in doctrine, and strictness in discipline, than the establishment from which they dissent, it is not to be wondered at that a person of Mr. *Howard's* disposition should regard the various denominations of sectaries with predilection, and attach himself to their most distinguished members. In London he seems chiefly to have joined the Baptist congregation in Wild-street, long under the ministry of the much-respected Dr. Stennett. His connexions were, I believe, least with that class called the Rational Dissenters; yet he probably had not a more intimate friend in the world than Dr. Price, who always ranked among them. It was his constant practice to join in the service of the establishment when he had not the opportunity



opportunity of attending a place of dissenting worship; and though he was warmly attached to the interests of the party he espoused, yet he had that true spirit of catholicism, which led him to honour virtue and religion wherever he found them, and to regard the *means* only as they were subservient to the *end*.

He was created a Fellow of the Royal Society on May 13, 1756. This honour was not, I presume, conferred upon him in consequence of any extraordinary proficiency in science which he had manifested; but rather in conformity to the laudable practice of that society, of attaching gentlemen of fortune and leisure to the interests of knowledge, by incorporating them into their body. Mr. *Howard* was not unmindful of the obligation he

lay under to contribute something to the common stock of information.. Three short papers of his are published in the *Transactions*. These are,

In Vol. LIV. On the Degree of Cold observed at Cardington in the Winter of 1763, when Bird's Thermometer was as low as  $10\frac{1}{2}$ .

In Vol. LVII. On the Heat of the Waters at Bath, containing a Table of the Heat of the Waters of the different Baths.

In Vol. LXI. On the Heat of the Ground on Mount Vesuvius.

This list may serve to give an idea of the kind and degree of his philosophical research. Meteorological observations were much to his taste; and even in his later tours, when he was occupied by  
very

very different objects; he never travelled without some instruments for that purpose. I have heard him likewise mention some experiments on the effects of the union of the primary colours in different proportions, in which he employed himself with some assiduity.

After the death of his wife, in the year 1756, he set out upon another tour, intending to commence it with a visit to the ruins of Lisbon. The event of this design will be hereafter mentioned. He remained abroad a few months; and, on his return, began to alter the house on his estate at Cardington near Bedford, where he settled. In 1758 he made a very suitable alliance with Miss *Henrietta Leeds*, eldest daughter of Edward Leeds, Esq; of Croxton, Cambridgeshire, king's

serjeant; and sister of the present Edward Leeds, Esq; a Master in Chancery, and of Joseph Leeds, Esq; of Croydon. With this lady, who possessed in an eminent degree all the mild and amiable virtues proper to her sex, he passed, as I have often heard him declare, the only years of true enjoyment which he had known in life. Soon after his marriage he purchased Watcombe, in the New Forest, Hampshire, and removed thither. Concerning his way of life in this pleasant retreat, I find nothing characteristic to relate, except the state of perfect security and harmony in which he managed to live in the midst of a people, against whom his predecessor thought it necessary to employ all the contrivances of engines and guns in order to preserve

preserve himself from their hostilities. He had, indeed, none of those propensities which so frequently embroil country gentlemen with their neighbours, both small and great. He was no sportsman, no executor of the game laws, and in no respect an encroacher on the rights and advantages of others. In possessing him, the poor could not fail soon to find that they had acquired a protector and benefactor; and I am unwilling to believe that in any part of the world these relations are not returned with gratitude and attachment. After continuing at Watcombe three or four years, he sold the place, and went back to Cardington, which thenceforth became his fixed residence.

Here

Here he steadily pursued those plans, both with respect to the regulation of his personal and family concerns, and to the promotion of the good of those around him, which principle and inclination led him to approve. Though without the ambition of making a splendid appearance, he had a taste for elegant neatness in his habitation and furniture. His sobriety of manners and peculiarities of living did not fit him for much promiscuous society; yet no man received his select friends with more true hospitality; and he always maintained an intercourse with several of the first persons in his county, who knew and respected his worth. Indeed, however uncomplying he might be with the freedoms

doms and irregularities of polite life, he was by no means negligent of its received forms; and, though he might be denominated a man of scruples and singularities, no one would dispute his claim to the title of a *gentleman*.

But the terms on which he held society with persons of his own condition, are of much less importance in the view I mean to take of his character, than the methods by which he rendered himself a blessing to the indigent and friendless in a small circle, before he extended his benevolence to so wide a compass. It seems to have been the capital object of his ambition, that the poor in his village should be the most orderly in their manners, the neatest in their persons and habitations, and possessed of the  
greatest

greatest share of the comforts of life, that could be met with in any part of England. And as it was his disposition to carry every thing he undertook to the greatest pitch of perfection, so he spared no pains or expence to effect this purpose. He began by building a number of neat cottages on his estate, annexing to each a little land for a garden, and other conveniences. In this project, which might be considered as an object of taste as well as of benevolence, he had the full concurrence of his excellent partner. I remember his relating, that once, having settled his accounts at the close of a year, and found a balance in his favour, he proposed to his wife to make use of it in a journey to London, or any other gratification she chose. "What a pretty cottage



cottage it would build," was her answer; and the money was so employed. These comfortable habitations he peopled with the most industrious and sober tenants he could find; and over them he exercised the superintendence of master and father combined. He was careful to furnish them with employment, to assist them in sickness and distress, and to educate their children. In order to preserve their morals, he made it a condition that they should regularly attend their several places of worship, and abstain from public-houses, and from such amusements as he thought pernicious; and he secured their compliance with his rules by making them tenants at will.

I shall here beg leave to digress a little, in order to make some general observations

observations on the different methods that  
 may be proposed for bettering the con-  
 dition of the lowest and most numerous  
 class among us. In the state in which  
 they too frequently appear, depressed to  
 the extreme point of indigence, unable  
 by their utmost exertions to obtain more  
 than the bare necessities of existence,  
 debased by the total want of instruc-  
 tion, and partaking of nothing that  
 can dignify the human character, it is  
 no wonder that a benevolent person of  
 the higher ranks in society should con-  
 sider them as creatures of an inferior  
 species, only to be benefited by the con-  
 stant exercise of his authority and super-  
 intendence. And I believe the fact to  
 be, that, from the operation of our poor  
 laws and other circumstances, the poor  
 in

in this country are more thoughtless, improvident, and helpless, than those of almost any other nation. Humanity will therefore, in such a state of things, think it necessary to assume the entire management of those who can neither think nor act for their own good; and will direct and over-rule all their concerns, just as it would those of children and idiots. In short, it will aim at such a kind of influence, as the Jesuits of Paraguay established, (perhaps with the same benevolent views) over the simple natives.

But is this state of pupilage to be perpetual? and, in a land of liberty and equal laws, is the great body of people always to exist in a condition of actual subjection to and dependence on the few?

Are

Are they never to be intrusted with their own happiness, but always to look up for support and direction to those who in reality are less independent than themselves? This is an idea which a liberal mind will be unwilling to admit; and it will anxiously look forward to a period, in which meanness of condition shall not necessarily imply debasement of nature; but those of *every* rank in society, feeling powers within themselves to secure their essential comforts, shall rely upon their own exertions, and be guided by the dictates of their own reason. That this is not an imaginary state of things, the general condition of the lowest classes in some countries, and even in some parts of England, where the working poor, at the same time that their earnings

ings

ings enable them to procure the comforts of life, are inured to habits of sobriety and frugality, is a sufficient proof.

There are few counties in England which afford less employment to a numerous poor than that of Bedford; of course, wages are low, and much distress would prevail, were it not for the humanity of the gentlemen who reside upon their estates. Among these, Mr. *Howard* distinguished himself by a peculiar attention to the comfort and improvement of his dependents; and he was accordingly held by them in the highest respect and veneration. I may add, that he possessed their *love*; which is not always the case with those who render essential services to people of that class. But he treated them with kindness, as well as with beneficence;

eficence; and he particularly avoided  
 every thing stern or imperious in his  
 manner towards them. Whatever there  
 might appear of strictness in the disci-  
 pline he enforced, it had only in view  
 their best interests; and if under his pro-  
 tection they could pass a tranquil old  
 age in their own comfortable cottages,  
 rather than end their lives in a work-  
 house, the subordination to which they  
 submitted was amply compensated. It  
 is certain that the melioration of man-  
 ners and principles which he promot-  
 ed, was the most effectual means of  
 eventually rendering them more inde-  
 pendent; and I have reason to know,  
 that, latterly at least, he was as well af-  
 fected to the *rights*, as he was solicitous  
 to augment the *comforts*, of the poor.

His charities were not confined to those more immediately connected with his property; they took in the whole circle of neighbourhood. His bounty was particularly directed to that fundamental point in improving the condition of the poor, giving them a sober and useful education. From early life he attended to this object; and he established schools for both sexes, conducted upon the most judicious plan. The girls were taught reading, and needle-work in a plain way: the boys reading, and some of them writing, and the rudiments of arithmetic. They were regularly to attend public worship in the way their parents approved. The number brought up in these schools was fluctuating, but the institutions were uninter-

rupted. In every other way in which a man thoroughly disposed to do good with the means providence has bestowed upon him, can exercise his liberality, Mr. *Howard* stood among the foremost. He was not only a subscriber to various public schemes of benevolence; but his private charities were largely diffused, and remarkably well directed. It was, indeed, only to his particular confidants and coadjutors that many of these were ever known; but they render him the most ample testimony in this respect. His very intimate and confidential friend, the Rev. Mr. Thomas Smith of Bedford, gives me the following account of this part of his conduct, at a time when he was deeply engaged in those public exertions which might be supposed to interfere

interfere



interfere with his private and local benefactions. “He still continued to devise liberal things for his poor neighbours and tenants; and, considering how much his heart and time were engaged in his great and comprehensive plans, it was surprising with what minuteness he would send home his directions about his private donations. His *schools* were continued to the last.” It is impossible any stronger proof can be given, that the habit of doing good was wrought into his very nature, than that, while his public actions placed him without a rival for deeds of philanthropy, he should still be unable to satisfy his benevolent desires without his accustomed benefits to his neighbours and dependents.

Another

Another early feature of that character which Mr. *Howard* afterwards so conspicuously displayed, was a determined resistance of injustice and oppression. No one could be more firmly relied on as the protector of right and innocence against unfeeling and unprincipled power. His indignation was roused by any attempts to encroach or domineer; and his spirit led him, without hesitation, to express, both in words and actions, his sense of such conduct. As no man could be more perfectly independent, both in mind and situation, than himself, he made that use of his advantage which every independent man ought to do;—he acted as principle directed him, regardless whom he might displease by it;

it; he strongly marked his different sensations with respect to different characters; and he was not less strenuous in opposing pernicious schemes, than in promoting beneficial ones.

The love of order and regularity likewise marked the early as well as the later periods of his life; it directed his own domestic concerns equally with his plans for the benefit of others. His disposition of time was exact and methodical. He accurately knew the state of all his affairs; and the hand of economy regulated what the heart of generosity dispensed. His taste in dress, furniture, and every thing exterior, was turned to simplicity and neatness; and this conformity of disposition rendered him an admirer of the sect of Quakers, with many

individuals of which he maintained an intimate connexion.

In common with many other benevolent and virtuous characters, he had a fondness for gardening, and the cultivation of plants both useful and ornamental. Indeed, as his own diet was almost entirely of the vegetable kind, he had various inducements to attend to this pleasing occupation. That most valuable root, the potato, was a great favourite with him; and a remarkably productive species of it, which he recommended to public notice, was distinguished by his name. His garden was an object of curiosity, both for the elegant manner in which it was laid out, and for the excellence of its productions; and in his various travels he frequently brought

brought home, and distributed among his friends, the seeds of curious kinds of cultivated vegetables.

In this manner Mr. *Howard* passed the tranquil years of his settled residence at Cardington; happy in himself, and the instrument of good to all around him. But this state was not long to continue. His domestic felicity received a fatal wound from the death of his beloved wife, in the year 1765, soon after delivery of her only child. It is unnecessary to say how a heart like his must have felt on such an event. They who have been witnesses of the sensibility with which, many years afterwards, he recollected it, and know how he honoured and cherished her memory, will conceive his sensations at that trying period. He

was thenceforth attached to his home only by the duties annexed to it; of which the most interesting was the education of his infant son. This was an office which almost immediately commenced; for, according to his ideas, education had place from the very first dawn of the mental faculties. The very unfortunate issue of his cares, with respect to his son, has caused a charge to be brought against him very deeply affecting his paternal character. That this charge was in its main circumstance false and calumnious, has, I trust, been proved, to the satisfaction of the public, by appeals to facts which have remained uncontroverted. I shall not, therefore, go over again the ground of this controversy; but shall rather follow the pro-  
per

per line of this work, by briefly displaying Mr. *Howard's* ideas on education, and his manner of executing them.

III. Regarding children as creatures possessed of strong passions and desires, without reason and experience to controul them, he thought that Nature seemed, as it were, to mark them out as the subjects of absolute authority ; and that the first and fundamental principle to be inculcated upon them, was implicit and unlimited obedience. This cannot be effected by any process of *reasoning*, before reason has its commencement ; and therefore must be the result of *coercion*. Now, as no man ever more effectually combined the *leniter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*, the coercion he practised was calm and gentle, but at the same time

time steady and resolute. I shall give an instance of it which I had from himself. His child one day, wanting something which he was not to have, fell into a fit of crying, which the nurse could not pacify. Mr. *Howard* took him from her, and laid him quietly in his lap, till, fatigued with crying, he became still. This process, a few times repeated, had such an effect, that the child, if crying ever so violently, was rendered quiet the instant his father took him. In a similar manner, without harsh words and threats, still less blows, he gained every other point which he thought necessary to gain, and brought the child to such a habit of obedience, that I have heard him say, he believed his son would have put his finger into the fire if he had commanded



commanded him. Certain it is, that many fathers could not, if they approved it, execute a plan of this kind; but Mr. *Howard* in this case only pursued the general method which he took to effect any thing which a thorough conviction of its propriety induced him to undertake. It is absurd, therefore, to represent him as wanting that milk of human kindness for his only son, with which he abounded for the rest of his fellow-creatures; for he aimed at what he thought the good of both, by the very same means; and, if he carried the point further with respect to his son, it was only because he was more interested in his welfare. But this course of discipline, whatever be thought of it, could not have been long practised, since the child

was

was early sent to school, and the father lived very little at home afterwards. As to its *effect* on the youth's mind (if *that*, and not intention, be the circumstance on which Mr. *Howard's* vindication is to depend), I consider it as a manifest impossibility, that controuling the *child*, should have been the cause of the *young man's* insanity. If any such remote cause could be supposed capable of producing such an effect, the opposite extreme of indulgence would have been a much more likely one. But I think it highly probable, that a father, whose presence was associated with the perception of restraint and refusal, should always have inspired more awe than affection; and should never have created that filial confidence, which is both the most pleasing

and

and most salutary of the sentiments attending that relation. And this has been the great evil of that rigorous mode of education, once so general, and still frequent, among persons of a particular persuasion. I have authority to say, that Mr. *Howard* was at length sensible that he had in some measure mistaken the mode of forming his son to that character he wished him to acquire; though, with respect to his mental derangement, I know that he imputed no blame to himself on that head. With what parental sorrow he was affected by that event will appear in the progress of the narration.

Having now given such a view of the temper and manners of this excellent person, in his private situation, as may  
 serve

serve to introduce him to the reader's acquaintance at the time of his assuming a public character, I shall, without further delay, proceed to trace him through those years of his life, the employment of which alone has rendered him an object of the curiosity and admiration of his countrymen.

In the year 1773 Mr. *Howard* was nominated High-Sheriff of the county of Bedford. An obstacle, however, lay in the way of his accepting that office, concerning which I shall take the liberty of making a few remarks.

When a principled Dissenter, whose condition in life permits him to aspire to the honour of serving his country in some post of magistracy, reflects on his situation, he finds that he must make  
his

his election of one of the three following determinations. He must either comply with a religious rite of another church, merely on account of its being made the condition of receiving the office; or take upon himself the office without such compliance, under all the hazard that attends it; or he must quietly sit down under that *vacation* from public charges which the state, in its wisdom, has imposed upon him; satisfied with promoting the welfare of individuals by modes not interdicted to him. It would be great presumption in me to decide which of these determinations is most conformable to duty. In fact, there is only a choice of difficulties; and the decision between them must be left to every man's own feelings, which, if his inten-

E

tions

tions be good and honest, will scarcely lead him wrong. But it was perfectly suitable to Mr. *Howard's* character to make option of *the office with the hazard*: for as, on the one hand, no consideration on earth could have induced him to violate his religious principles; so, on the other, his active disposition, and zeal for the public good, strongly impelled him to assume a station in which those qualities might have free scope for exertion; and as to personal hazard, *that* was never an obstacle in his way. There may be casuists who will condemn this choice, and regard it as a serious offence against the laws of his country, to have taken upon him an office without complying with its preliminary conditions. But, I conceive, the sincere philanthropist will  
rather

rather make a different reflection, and feel a shock in thinking, that, had Mr. *Howard* been influenced by those apprehensions which would have operated upon most men, he would have been excluded from that situation, which gave occasion to all those services which he rendered to humanity in his own country, and throughout Europe\*.

He

\* The penalties to which Mr. *Howard* in this instance exposed himself are declared in the following clause of the *Test Act*, which cannot too often be placed before the eyes of Britons. “ Every person that shall neglect or refuse to take the sacrament as aforesaid, and yet, after such neglect or refusal, shall execute any of the said offices or employments, and being thereupon lawfully convicted, *shall be disabled to sue or use any action, bill, plaint, or information, in course of law, or to prosecute any suit in any court of equity, or to be guardian of any child, or executor or administrator*

He entered upon his office with the resolution of performing all its duties with

*“ of any person, or capable of any legacy or deed of gift, or to bear any office; and shall forfeit the sum of five hundred pounds, to be recovered by him or them that shall sue for the same.”*—In the debate on the repeal of this act, the Mover with much eloquence introduced the very case of Mr. Howard, and seemed considerably to impress his audience by the supposition of such a man suffering its penalties, in consequence of an information which any villain might lay against him. In reply it was said, that, whatever were a man's intentions, if he voluntarily contravened a known law of his country, it ought not to be reckoned a hardship that he incurred the penalties by which it was sanctioned. And this reasoning is undoubtedly just, as it respects the interest of an individual put in competition with the security of a law. But surely it is a proper consideration for the legislature, whether a law be grounded on those principles of equity and general utility which can justify the imposition of such dreadful penalties for the breach of it, especially when experience has shewn, that the most conscientious and well-intentioned persons are most liable to incur them.

that



that punctuality which marked his conduct in every thing he undertook. Of these, one of the most important, though least agreeable, is the inspection of the *prisons* within its jurisdiction. But this to him was not only an act of duty, it interested him as a material concern of humanity.

The attention of Mr. *Howard* to persons “ sick and in prison” is by himself dated as far back as the year 1756, when he was induced by a singular, but what I should call a sublime, curiosity to visit Lisbon, then lying in the recent ruins of its terrible earthquake. The packet in which he sailed being taken by a French privateer, he, with the rest of the crew, was first exposed to all the barbarities exercised by those licensed pirates, who

possess the right of the sword, not mollified by the feelings of gentlemen; and, on his arrival in France, he for a time endured some of the hardships of a prisoner of war, and became acquainted with all the sufferings of his countrymen in the same situation. These, on his return to England, he took care to make known to the *Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen*, who gave him their thanks for his information, and exerted themselves to obtain redress. It was impossible that so feeling a lesson of the calamities inflicted upon the unprotected classes of mankind, by fellow-creatures “dressed in a little brief authority,” should fail to make a durable impression on such a mind as Mr. *Howard's*.

It

It was not, however, till the period of his serving the office of sheriff, that the distresses of those confined in the civil prisons of his own country engaged his particular notice. In the Introduction to his *State of the Prisons* he has, with the most unassuming simplicity, related the gradual progress of his inquiries; and in what manner he was led, from an examination of the gaols in his own small county, to an investigation of all the circumstances belonging to this branch of police throughout the kingdom.

The first thing which struck him, was the enormous injustice of remanding to prison for the payment of *fees*, those who had been acquitted or discharged without trial. As the magistrates of his county, though willing to redress this

grievance, did not conceive themselves possessed of the power of granting a remedy, Mr. *Howard* travelled into some of the neighbouring counties in search of a precedent. In this search, scenes of calamity and injustice still opening upon him, he went on, and paid visits to most of the *County Gaols* in England. Some peculiarly deplorable objects coming in his view who had been brought from the *Bridewels*, he was induced to enter upon an examination of these places of confinement; for which purpose he travelled again into the counties he had before seen, and into all the rest, visiting *Houses of Correction, City and Town Gaols*.

He had carried on these inquiries with so much assiduity, that so early as March 1774 he was desired to communicate his  
information

information to the House of Commons, and received their thanks. As he was then little known, I cannot much wonder that so extraordinary an instance of pure and active benevolence was not universally comprehended, even by that patriotic body; for a member thought fit to ask him, “at whose expence he travelled?” a question which Mr. *Howard* could scarcely answer without some indignant emotions. Soon after this public testimony given to the existence of great abuses and defects in our prisons, a very worthy member, Mr. *Popham*, brought into the House two bills, one *for the relief of acquitted prisoners in matter of fees*; the other, *for preserving the health of prisoners*. These salutary acts passed during the same session, and  
made

made a commencement of those reforms which have since been so much extended. Mr. *Howard*, aware of the great deficiency of the mode of *promulgating laws* among us, had these acts printed in a different character, and sent to every keeper of a county gaol in England.

In this year he was induced, by the urgent persuasions of his neighbours and friends of the town of Bedford, to stand candidate, in conjunction with Mr. *Whitbread*, to represent that borough in Parliament. No two persons could be better entitled to the esteem of a town; and they were very warmly supported in a contest, which however terminated in the return of two other gentlemen. Mr. *Whitbread* and Mr. *Howard* petitioned the House against the return; and the  
event

event was, that the former, and one of the sitting members, were declared duly elected. To those who are acquainted with the constitution of that borough, it will not appear extraordinary, that a person possessing the attachment of a majority of the inhabitant voters should lose his election. This, however, was a most fortunate circumstance for the public; since, if Mr. *Howard* had obtained a seat in the House of Commons, his plans for the reformation of prisons must have been brought within a narrow compass; and the collateral inquiries which, so greatly to the advantage of humanity, he afterwards adopted, could never have existed.

It was Mr. *Howard*'s intention to have published his account of English Prisons  
in

in spring 1775 ; but as he was sensible, that to point out defects, without at the same time suggesting remedies, would be of little advantage, he thought it best to examine with his own eyes what had been actually put in practice with respect to this part of police, in some of the most enlightened countries on the continent. Accordingly, in that year he visited France, Flanders, Holland, and Germany ; and in 1776 repeated his visit to those countries, and also went to Switzerland. In the intervals he made a journey to Scotland and Ireland, and revisited the county gaols and many others in England.

Thus furnished with a stock of information greater than had ever before been collected on this subject ; and, indeed, probably greater than *any* man had,



had, in the same space of time, ever collected on *any* subject that required similar pains ; he offered it to the public in 1777, in a quarto volume of near 500 pages, dedicated to the House of Commons, by way of grateful acknowledgment for the honour conferred on him by their thanks, and for the attention they had bestowed on the business. Before I proceed to give an account of this work, I shall just observe, that so zealous was Mr. *Howard* to diffuse information, and so determined to obviate any idea that he meant to repay his expences by the profitable trade of *book-making*, that, besides a profuse munificence in presenting copies to all the principal persons in the kingdom, and all his particular friends, he insisted on fixing the price of the vo-

lume so low, that, had every copy been sold, he would still have presented the public with all the plates, and great part of the printing. And this practice he followed in all his subsequent publications; so that, with literal propriety, he may be said to have *given* them to the world. By the large expences of his journey, charities, and publications, he has made himself even a greater *pecuniary* benefactor to mankind than can readily be paralleled in any age or country, his proportionate circumstances considered. Yet how small a part was this of the sacrifices he made!

He chose the press of Mr. Eyres at Warrington, induced by various elegant specimens which had issued from it, and by the opportunity a country press afforded,

forded, of having the work done under his own inspection, at his own time, and with all the minute accuracy of correction he determined to bestow on it. I may also say, that an opinion of the advantage he might there enjoy of some literary assistance in the revision and improvement of his papers, was a farther motive. To this choice I was indebted for that intimate personal acquaintance with him, which I shall ever esteem one of the most honourable circumstances of my life, and the lively recollection of which will, I trust, never quit me while memory remains. He resided in Warrington during the whole time of printing, and his attention to business was most indefatigable. During a very severe winter he made it his practice to rise at

three

three or four in the morning, for the purpose of collating every word and figure of his daily proof sheet with the original.

As I thought it right to mention Mr. *Howard's* literary deficiencies, it is become necessary to inform the public of the manner in which his works were composed. On his return from his tours he took all his memorandum-books to an old retired friend of his, who assisted him in methodizing them, and copied out the whole matter in correct language. They were then put into the hands of Dr. *Price*, from whom they underwent a revision, and received occasionally considerable alterations. What Mr. *Howard* himself thought of the advantages they derived from his assistance, will appear from

from the following passages in letters to Dr. Price. “ I am ashamed to think “ how much I have accumulated your “ labours, yet I glory in that assistance “ to which I owe so much credit in the “ world, and, under Providence, success “ in my endeavours.”——“ It is from “ your kind aid and assistance, my dear “ friend, that I derive so much of my “ character and influence. I exult in “ declaring it, and shall carry a grate- “ ful sense of it to the last hour of my “ existence.”—With his papers thus cor- rected, Mr. *Howard* came to the press at Warrington; and first he read them all over carefully with me, which perusal was repeated, sheet by sheet, as they were printed. As new facts and ob- servations were continually suggesting

**F** themselves

themselves to his mind, he put the matter of them upon paper as they occurred, and then requested me to clothe them in such expressions as I thought proper. On these occasions, such was his diffidence, that I found it difficult to make him acquiesce in his own language when, as frequently happened, it was unexceptionable. Of this additional matter, some was interwoven with the text, but the greater part was necessarily thrown into notes, which, in some of his volumes, are numerous.

The title of this first work is, *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales; with preliminary Observations, and an Account of some Foreign Prisons.* It begins with a *general View of Distress in Prisons*, shewing in what respects those of England

land

land are deficient in the articles of food, water, bedding, and fresh air; and that the morals of the prisoners are totally neglected, the most criminal and abandoned being suffered to corrupt the younger and less practised. Notice is also taken of the *gaol-fever*, a disease which has in a peculiar manner infested the prisons of this country, and has at various times spread its ravages from them among our courts of judicature, our fleets, and armies. The author's next section is on *Bad Customs in Prisons*, under which he takes notice of the demand of garnish, the permission of gaming, the use of irons, the practice of varying the towns where the assizes are held, the local unfrequency of gaol-delivery, the fees still demanded by clerks

of affize and of the peace, the non-residency of gaolers, the crowding of gaols with the wives and children of prisoners, and the circumstance of some gaols being private property. From this, and the foregoing section, every one must be convinced of the dreadful state of our police in this important matter, and the absolute necessity for a reformation. For proof that the complaints here made in general terms are not unfounded or exaggerated, he properly refers to the subsequent account of particular gaols, where they are too abundantly verified. He concludes the second section with an enumeration of all the prisoners in England and Wales, under their several classes, who, in 1776, amounted to 4084, a number much less than some vague conjectures



jectures had stated, yet sufficiently great to demand the serious attention of the legislature, especially when it is considered that every man in prison may be reckoned to have two dependents on him for support.

Mr. Howard's third section offers *proposed Improvements in the Structure and Management of Prisons*. He begins with observations on the prison itself, with respect to its situation and plan, the latter of which is illustrated by an engraving. He then proceeds to that most essential topic, the regulations. These he considers under the several heads of gaoler, chaplain, surgeon, fees, cleanliness, food, bedding, rules and orders, and inspector. He much insists upon the necessity of absolutely taking away the

*tap* from the keepers of prisons, the possession of which was obviously the cause of promoting intemperance and riot, from the interest it gave the keeper in such irregularities. In lieu of this source of profit, he proposes a liberal addition to the salaries of this officer, the importance and respectability of whose employ he every where inculcates. He makes a separate article of bridewells, the original penitentiary-houses of the country, and planned with much wisdom, but which, by long neglect and abuse, were become rather a nuisance than an advantage to the police. In many of them, though the persons confined were sentenced to *hard labour*, no work of any kind was done; and this state of idleness, with the company of hardened criminals, proved

to

to be a most effectual method of completing the corruption of young and petty offenders. Various excellent remarks and suggestions are given in the whole of this section, which contains the ground-work of all improvement in the economy of prisons and houses of correction.

In sect. IV. Mr. *Howard* gives an account of *Foreign Prisons*; not of *all* he had seen, but of such only as afforded matter of instruction; nor in these does he notice the frauds and defects he observed, for he says, “ the redress and  
 “ investigation of *foreign* abuses was not  
 “ my object.” The countries of which the prisons are described are France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and Flanders. In the first, the suspicious policy which *then* prevailed would have

rendered it very difficult for him to have obtained access to the interior part of the prisons, had he not availed himself of a benevolent rule, which permits any person to distribute *alms* to the prisoners with his own hands. A spirit of order and precision, tempered with humanity, was observable in the conduct of this department, the regulations of which were fixed by a very comprehensive and judicious code contained in an *arret* of 1717. In *Switzerland*, the separation of male and female prisoners, the solitary confinement of felons, and the employment of those called galley-slaves, are circumstances deserving notice. The *German* prisons are regulated in a similar manner; and the houses of correction at *Manheim*, *Hamburg*, and *Bremen*, afford

ford useful examples of order and industry. But it is in *Holland* that the purpose of reforming criminals by a course of discipline is carried into execution with most care and effect. Few debtors and few atrocious offenders are to be found there; and the rasp and spin-houses contain the great body of prisoners. The regulations of these are given in detail, and the different employments of the prisoners in different towns are particularly noted. Holland appears to be Mr. Howard's great school, to which we shall see that he was never wearied in returning. The *Austrian Netherlands* offer some of the largest establishments of the penitentiary kind, and prove the possibility of managing a great number of criminals so as to make them useful to the state,

and

and decent in their behaviour, by the aid of steady discipline and separate confinement at night. Mr. *Howard* saw, what I suppose was then deemed an impossibility in England, in the house of correction at *Ghent*, near 190 stout criminals governed with as much apparent ease as the most sober and well-disposed assembly in civil society. The regulations of this prison are deservedly given at some length. Mr. *Howard* concludes this section with a forcible and manly appeal to his countrymen with respect to the comparison he was obliged to exhibit between foreign and English police in this point, so unfavourable to the latter; calling upon his reader to judge, from the facts laid before him, “whether a design of reforming our prisons be merely visionary;

visionary; and whether idleness, debauchery, disease, and famine, be the necessary attendants of a prison, or only connected with it in our ideas, for want of a more perfect knowledge and more enlarged views."

Section V. takes up the greatest part of the book. It contains a *particular account of English prisons*, arranged according to the circuits, and comprising every county in England and Wales. The mode adopted is very well contrived for the easy consultation of magistrates and other persons concerned. Every principal prison in London, and every county and city gaol, has the leading facts respecting it disposed in a short table under the four heads of *gaoler, prisoners, chaplain, and surgeon*. A brief description follows of  
situation,

situation, plan, measurements, &c. with such remarks, either of approbation or censure, as the circumstances suggested. Lists are given of legacies and benefactions; and all tables of fees, and rules and orders, are copied *verbatim*. Next to these, are concise accounts of all the county bridewels, and the town gaols and bridewels, with occasional remarks. The work is closed by some *tables* relative to fees and numbers, crimes and punishments of criminals. A short *conclusion* terminates the whole, in which the author apologizes for the language of censure he has so often been compelled to use, enumerates the leading objects requiring reform, and promises, that if such a *thorough parliamentary enquiry* into this great object, as alone can prove effectual  
to



to put it upon a proper footing, should be undertaken, he would devote his time to a more extensive foreign journey, for the sake of obtaining new information to lay before the public.

I cannot dismiss the account of Mr. Howard's first and great work, without a few reflections, to which the contemplation of it gives rise. And first, we may derive from it a clear idea of the capital objects which the author had at heart respecting prisoners. These were, to *alleviate their miseries*, and *correct their vices*. As to the former purpose, he considered that men, partaking a common nature, have certain claims upon their fellow-creatures which nothing can entirely abrogate;—that even the highest degree of criminality does not absolutely exclude  
 compassion

compassion towards the perpetrators of crimes, especially when suffering under their effects ;—that as no man passes through life without some deviation from strict rectitude, so none has lived without the performance of some good actions ;—and that, although human laws must draw a line between such circumstances of conduct as do, or do not, come within their cognizance, yet there is a tribunal before which all mankind must appear as culprits, only distinguished by the *degree* of delinquency. He further considered, that among the inmates of a prison there is every possible degree of moral demerit, from the mere inconsiderate violation of some hard, ill-understood, local law, to the deliberate breach of the most sacred and universal rule of action ; and  
that

that a great number are, in the eye of the law, innocent persons, only under a temporary state of confinement, till their conduct is properly investigated. From these different views of the subject, he convinced himself, that it was the duty of every society to pay due attention to the *health*, and, in some degree, even to the *comforts*, of *all* who are held in a state of confinement;—that wanton and unnecessary rigour should be practised upon *none*;—and that *some* were entitled to all the indulgences compatible with their condition. It was, however, by no means his wish (as some chose to represent it) to render a prison so comfortable an abode, that the lowest order of society might find their condition even bettered by admission into it. On the

4

contrary,

contrary, the system of *discipline* which he desired to establish, was such as would appear extremely grievous to those of an idle and licentious disposition. For, whenever imprisonment was made the *punishment* of a crime, his idea of *reformation* became a leading principle in the regulation of prisons; and it was that which cost him the chief labour in collecting and applying facts. To accomplish this end, he shewed that these things were essential;—strict and constant superintendence—close and regular employment—religious instruction—rewards for industry and good behaviour, and penalties for sloth and audaciousness—distribution into classes and divisions according to age, sex, delinquency, &c.—and occasional and nocturnal solitude. In laying down

down these regulations, he might be thought to have given way to a certain *austerity*, were it not so tempered by attention to the real demands of human nature, and sanctified by a regard to the best interests of offenders themselves, that the *friend of mankind* was ever apparent, even in the strict disciplinarian. He extremely lamented that the plan of *reformation* seemed, of all parts of his system of improvement, least entered into or understood in this country. The vulgar idea that our criminals are hardened and abandoned beyond all possibility of amendment, appeared to him equally irrational and pernicious. He scorned, through negligence or despair, to give up the worst cases of mental corruption; he fully believed that proper remedies, duly

G                      administered,

administered, would recover a large share of them; and he thought it the greatest of cruelties to consign a soul to perdition, without having made every effort for retrieving it. Merely to *get rid* of convicts by execution or perpetual banishment, he regarded as a piece of barbarous policy, equally denoting want of feeling, and deficiency of resource; and he had not so much English prejudice about him, as to suppose, that a system not adopted in this country was therefore absurd or impracticable.

My second topic of reflection is the striking proof this work affords of the extensive benefit, arising from a *free press*. By its means we see an individual, enjoying neither royal nor ministerial, patronage, but solely borne up by ardent

zeal for the public good, and the resources of his own mind and fortune, enabled, not only to lay before the world complete information concerning a most important and little known subject, but, in some measure, also to *enforce* the correction of abuses, by bringing before *the bar of the public* those by whose negligence or criminality they had been fostered. For as the history of mankind has shewn, on the one hand; that palpable injustice and mismanagement, even in an absolute government, cannot long stand their ground against the odium of an enlightened public; so, on the other, it has proved, that even in free constitutions, notwithstanding all their boasted checks and balances, very gross abuses may long prevail, unless they are placed in open

day, and submitted to the censure of the nation at large. It is scarcely, I think, to be doubted, that the freedom we enjoy in this country, and the ultimate defeat of every pernicious project, are less owing to the *mechanism* of our constitution, than to the habitual practice (rather assumed by the spirit of the people than granted by the laws) of subjecting every public measure to popular discussion by means of the press. From this ready communication of facts and opinions, it has happened, that many useful designs and improvements have among us originated from persons who had neither power nor interest of their own, but whose plans were adopted in consequence of the public conviction. The respect paid to Mr. *Howard's* virtues, abilities, and industry, placed



placed him in a manner at the head of the department in which he had engaged as a volunteer ; and this, not only in his own country, but afterwards, in some measure, throughout Europe. Though in exercising the office of a censor he was superior to the fear of giving offence, yet he ever observed the utmost delicacy in marking out *individuals* as objects of blame. He boldly and forcibly displayed the *abuse*, but left it to those more immediately concerned, to take notice of the *delinquent*. It cannot be questioned, that numbers looked with an evil eye upon his keen researches and free detections ; but how could they venture, before the public, to confront a man whose assertions were correct, whose intentions were above all suspicion, and

whose life would stand the severest test? May this example animate all future friends of mankind with a noble confidence becoming their cause!

The House of Commons now took up, with laudable zeal, the important business of regulating the prisons; and in the draught of a bill “to punish by imprisonment and hard labour certain offenders, and to establish proper places for their reception,” the plan was formed upon the Rasp and Spin-houses in Holland. Mr. *Howard* was now called upon by his promise, as well as his inclination, to make a new tour for the purpose of acquiring fresh and more exact information. He, accordingly, in April 1778, went over to *Holland*, and revisited with the greatest attention the well-conducted establishments

establishments of the penitentiary kind in the United Provinces. Thence he travelled into *Germany*, taking his course through Hanover and Berlin, to Vienna. From this capital he proceeded to *Italy* by Venice; and, having gone as far south as Naples, returned by the western side of that country to *Switzerland*. Thence he pursued the course of the Rhine through *Germany*; and, crossing the *Low Countries* to *France*, returned to England in Jan. 1779. During the spring and summer of this year he made another complete tour of *England* and *Wales*, and likewise took a journey through *Scotland* and *Ireland*.

The labours of these two years were certainly not less productive of useful information than his former journies. In

some respects they were more valuable, since, being now fully master of his subject, and acquainted with the means of procuring the best intelligence, he pursued his inquiries with greater ease and effect. He was now, too, a distinguished character in Europe, and might venture to assume that kind of *authority*, to which the collection of facts, interesting to all civilized nations, seemed to entitle him. It is here proper to mention, that although he often found it necessary, especially when treading new ground, to avail himself of recommendations to persons high in rank and office; yet that he much preferred, when he could practise it, carrying on his researches as an unknown individual, whose business was not suspected, and who took such times and opportunities

unities of making his visits, as secured him against any thing like disguise or preparation. And it was his general custom, after he had once obtained access to a prison by the presence and interposition of authority, to stay some time in the place, or revisit it, for the purpose of renewing his enquiries single and unexpected. Thus careful was he to guard against deception; and with such coolness of investigation did he execute a design which it required so much ardour of mind to conceive!

I shall not, however, conceal, that some sensible and not uncandid observers of his conduct have thought him too apt to be prejudiced by first impressions, the effects of which it appeared extremely difficult to remove; and they have also charged

charged him with sometimes giving undue credit to persons of inferior condition, at the places where he was making his inquiries; and likewise with being apparently better pleased with finding occasion to censure than to commend. If, in a few instances, there may have been grounds for these imputations (as nothing human is without its defects), yet I think his works may, on the whole, be confidently referred to, as proving, by an immense mass of allowed and uncontradicted facts, the accuracy of his representations. It is likewise to be considered, that, as abuses in general proceed from *superiors*, it was not likely that a fair account of them should be obtained from that quarter: and, as his great purpose was to *correct*, it is natural that his attention should

have

have been more drawn to what was wrong than what was right. A Hercules who went about in order to contend with monsters, had little to do with the fair forms of civil life. Yet numerous instances of liberal praise may be found in his works, especially where he could propose the object of it as an example proper for imitation.

The tours now before us were likewise rendered richer in utility by the comprehension of another great object, that of *hospitals*. To these institutions of humanity Mr. *Howard* had long been attached; he had been a promoter of them, and attentive to their improvement; and in his journies through this kingdom, he had seldom failed to visit the hospitals and infirmaries situated in  
our

our principal towns. He had also, in his first publication, taken cursory notice of a few which he saw abroad. But he now made them an avowed object of his examination; a circumstance, it may be supposed, not a little pleasing to his medical friends. For, although the knowledge collected by a professional man with similar opportunities would, doubtless, have been more applicable to the purpose of science, yet matter of fact, accurately stated by a sensible observer, must ever have its value. Besides, where can we expect to see the spirit and qualities of a *Howard*, united, in one of our profession, with his fortune and leisure?

The fruit of all this research appeared in the year 1780, in an *Appendix to the State of the Prisons in England and Wales*;  
containing



*containing a further Account of Foreign Prisons and Hospitals, with additional Remarks on the Prisons of this Country.* It is a quarto volume of about 200 pages, with several plates. The work begins with the foreign prisons and hospitals; and *Holland* takes the lead, since a main object of the journey was a minute account of the excellent regulations of the houses of correction in that country. Many of the rules, dietaries, &c. are copied; and on quitting the country, Mr. *Howard* gives his testimony to the large field of information on this subject that it affords, and says, that he knows not which most to admire, “ the neatness and cleanliness appearing in the prisons, the industry and regular conduct of the prisoners, or the humanity and attention

tention of the magistrates and governors." He takes little notice of the hospitals for the sick in Holland, not approving their mode of keeping patients so warm, and excluding the fresh air. At *Berlin*, the regularity and strictness of the police shews the ruling spirit of the great Frederic. A work-house here is conducted in the best Dutch mode. *Vienna* affords little to commend in its prisons: on the contrary, its horrid dungeons seem the abode of the extremest human misery. Scarcely any thing in Mr. *Howard's* descriptions is more touching than the following picture: "In one of the dark dungeons, down twenty-four steps, I thought I had found a person with the gaol-fever. He was loaded with heavy irons, and chained to the wall: anguish  
and

and misery appeared with tears clotted on his face. He was not capable of speaking to me; but, on examining his breast and feet for *petechiæ*, or spots, and finding a strong intermitting pulse, I was convinced that he was not ill of that disorder. A prisoner in an opposite cell told me, that the poor creature had desired him to call for assistance, and he had done it, but was not heard\*.” The

charities

\* This scene is the subject of the frontispiece to *Mr. Hayley's Ode to Mr. Howard*; and it is better drawn in the following stanza of that performance.

Where in the dungeon's loathsome shade  
The speechless captive clanks his chain,  
With heartless hope to raise that aid  
His feeble cries have call'd in vain :  
Thine eye his dumb complaint explores ;  
Thy voice his parting breath restores ;

Thy

charities of this city, chiefly founded by the late Empress Queen, are much more pleasing subjects of description.

Mr. *Howard* entered *Italy* with high expectations of improvement from its numerous charitable institutions and public edifices; nor does it appear that he was altogether disappointed, as this country affords him a pretty long and interesting article. The governments in which a spirit of improvement, and attention to public objects, seem most to prevail, are those of *Milan* and *Tuscany*. The hospitals in *Italy* afford some novelties and useful hints; but there appears to be a great difference among them as to cleanliness and good management. *Rome* and

Thy cares his ghastly visage clear  
From death's chill dew, with many a clotted tear,  
And to his thankful soul returning life endear.

*Milan*

*Milan* have well conducted houses of correction, of which plans and descriptions are given. In a room of the former is inscribed a sentence, which so admirably expressed Mr. *Howard's* idea concerning the purpose of civil policy relative to criminals, that he would, I believe, almost have thought it worth while to have travelled thither for that alone. PARUM EST COERCERE IMPROBOS POENA, NISI PROBOS EFFICIAS DISCIPLINA. *It is doing little to restrain the bad by punishment, unless you render them good by discipline.* The galleys belonging to various states in Italy, and used for punishment, may be usefully compared with our *bulks*.

The western side of *Germany* offers some good regulations in its houses of correction; but in general, the police of

H

this

this country is no object of imitation. The dungeons of *Liege* present pictures to the imagination more dreadful, if possible, than those of Vienna. “ In descending deep below ground (says Mr. *Howard*) I heard the moans of the miserable wretches in the dark dungeons. The sides and roof were all stone. In wet seasons, water from the fosses gets into them, and has greatly damaged the floors.”——“ The dungeons in the *new* prison are abodes of misery still more shocking; and confinement in them so overpowers human nature, as sometimes irrecoverably to take away the senses. *I heard the cries of the distracted* as I went down to them.” Surely the *Liegeois* cannot be blamed for endeavouring to place civil authority in different hands from those

those who thus outraged the feelings of human nature!

The additional notices of *France* are distinguished by an account of the Bastille, extracted from a scarce pamphlet, which Mr. *Howard* procured, not without hazard, and a translation of the whole of which he likewise printed. He had reason to believe, that this exposure to all Europe of the horrid secrets of this “prison house,” was a cause that his after-visits to that country were attended with no small danger to his liberty; and it was once not improbable, that Mr. *Howard* should have been in the number of those victims whom the demolition of that fortress of despotism restored to light and freedom. What a triumph must it have been to him, to have learn-

ed, that the frowning towers, which could not be approached, or even gazed at, without offence, were levelled to the ground, as the first sacrifice to the recovered rights of a generous nation ! It is remarkable, that France was of all countries that in which he found intelligence concerning the prisons, and other government establishments, most difficult to be obtained ; and this union of the suspicious rigour of the police with the exterior gaiety and frivolity of the national character, gave him no small disgust. It is to be presumed, that the change in their constitution will soften this contrast into a desirable harmony between the principles of the administration and the manners of the people. And Great Britain being then at war with

France,



France, Spain, and America, Mr. *Howard* could not be unmindful of that class of honourable prisoners to which he himself had once belonged. He very attentively visited the English prisoners of war confined in Calais and French Flanders, noting down their complaints, and all the particulars of their treatment. He also, as I have been well informed, clothed, at his own expence, several who had been shipwrecked on the French coast in the dreadful storm of December 31, 1778, and were left almost naked. He likewise exerted himself in dissuading the men from enlisting with the French, who were endeavouring to seduce them; by which he greatly offended the persons in office there, who could not imagine that he acted in all this as a private man, but

were strongly persuaded that he was a secret agent or spy of the English government. This natural supposition may serve as some apology for the suspicion and illiberality with which he was constantly treated in that country.

On his return to England, with the true spirit of a citizen of the world, he paid immediate visits to the French, Spanish, and American prisoners of war in this country; nor did he forget those in Scotland and Ireland. The results of his observations, given with the most perfect impartiality, succeed the account of foreign prisons and hospitals; and it cannot be doubted that they had considerable effect in alleviating the unavoidable hardships of war.

Mr. *Howard* next gives a brief account  
of

of what he observed worthy of notice in his tours through *Scotland* and *Ireland*. The former country being governed by a different system of municipal law from that of England, affords some useful remarks concerning imprisonment for debt, the form of administering an oath, and the mode of conducting executions. *Ireland*, has not been at all behindhand with the sister kingdom in passing acts for the liberal improvement of its prisons; but there did not at that time appear an equal attention in magistrates to put them in execution. Some remarks here introduced, concerning the practice of recruiting the army out of the gaols, will be thought important by those, who wish that the class of *armed citizens* should be

respectable, in proportion to its consequence.

The next article relates to the *Hulks on the Thames*. These, at their first institution, had been extremely unhealthy, in consequence of faults which Mr. Howard pointed out in his former work. Their state was now much mended by means of parliamentary interference; yet, on the whole, it was not a mode of imprisonment and employment which met with his approbation. Some further remarks on the *Gaol-fever* succeed; which, in addition to the general causes of want of fresh air and cleanliness, he attributes to such a sudden change of diet and lodging as breaks the spirits of convicts. This corresponds with the medical doctrine

trine of the effect of *debilitating* causes, in producing fevers of the *typhus* kind; yet it seems such a cause as cannot well be avoided.

The remainder of the book is occupied by a fresh survey of the prisons in England and Wales, in which such changes as had taken place since his former publication are noted, with occasional observations. The reader will remark with pleasure, that in most parts of the kingdom, various useful alterations had been made since the period in which Mr. *Howard* began his inquiries; and the great share he had in occasioning them will be universally admitted.

His *conclusion* expresses satisfaction with the result of his labours; and mentions, that it had been his intention now to re-

tire to the tranquil enjoyment of that compe nce Providence had bestowed on him, but that the earnest persuasions of those who thought him a proper person to superintend one of the great plans he had so much recommended, had induced him still to devote his time to the public. Concerning this matter, it is proper to enter into an explanation. I shall only first mention, that, together with this Appendix, there was printed a new edition, in octavo, of the *State of the Prisons*, with which all this additional matter was interwoven.

An act for establishing *Penitentiary Houses*, on which much labour and thought had been bestowed by men of great ability, passed in 1779. By this act, three *supervisors* were appointed for the

the purpose of superintending the execution of the buildings. The whole kingdom would naturally turn its eyes on Mr. *Howard*, as the first person whose services should be engaged on this occasion; but it was not an easy task to obtain his acquiescence. Among other objections, his extreme delicacy, with respect to pecuniary emolument, stood in his way; and even the moderate salary annexed to this office, seemed to him scarcely compatible with the absolute disinterestedness of conduct he had maintained, and was determined to preserve, during the whole of his labours. At length, however, the solicitations of his friends, particularly of the late Sir W. Blackstone, the great promoter of the design, together with a consciousness of the service he might render

render the public in this station, overcame his reluctance. Having resolved to accept of no salary for himself, and having made the association of his highly-respected friend, Dr. Fothergill, a condition of his compliance, he, with the Doctor, and Mr. Whately, treasurer of the Foundling-hospital, were nominated by his Majesty as the three supervisors. The first matter for their determination was, fixing on the spot where the two penitentiary houses for the metropolis should be erected. Various situations were proposed, and Mr. *Howard* paid due attention to all the plans, by visiting the spots, and maturely considering all circumstances favourable and objectionable. The result was, that his opinion and that of Dr. Fothergill coincided in giving a preference



ference to Islington, for reasons which he has stated in his last publication. Mr. Whately preferred the situation of Limehouse. By the death-bed advice of Sir W. Blackstone, the two friends adhered to their opinion; but the matter was made an affair of obstinate contention, and remained undecided during the year 1780. At the end of it Dr. Fothergill died; upon which event, Mr. *Howard*, foreseeing that the want of the support of such a colleague would render his future interference useless, sent his resignation of the office of supervisor in January 1781, in a letter to Earl Bathurst, which he has printed.

Now that Mr. *Howard* had freed himself from the engagement, which seemed to be the only obstacle between him and  
that

that elegant retreat which for so many years he had inhabited, it might naturally be imagined that he would sit down in repose, for the remainder of his life, satisfied with the unparalleled and successful exertions he had made for the relief of the most distressed portion of mankind; and thenceforth employ himself only in those more confined deeds of beneficence which he had ever practised. But it was a leading feature in his character, not to be content with any thing short of the greatest perfection, which every object of his pursuit was capable of attaining; and this principle could scarcely fail of applying itself to a subject so important as that which had for some years occupied his attention. Though his researches in those foreign countries which promised

most information, might have been supposed to have exhausted that source of improvement, yet, on surveying so large a tract of Europe as yet unvisited, he could not be satisfied to remain unacquainted with the useful facts relative to his purpose, which might possibly lie there concealed. And he was convinced, that every new visit, even to places already examined, would afford new instruction.

It was therefore no surprise to those who intimately knew him, to learn, that in the summer of 1781 he was set out on a tour to the capitals of Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and Poland, with the further intention of revisiting Holland and part of Germany. From this tour he returned towards the close of the year. I have before me a letter of his to a friend (the

Rev.

Rev. Mr. Smith of Bedford), dated Moscow, September 7, 1781, whence it appears, that these parts of the world were less suitable to his mode of living than the countries through which his former travels lay. “ I thought (says he) I could live where any man did live; but this northern journey, especially in Sweden, has pinched me:—no fruit, no garden stuff, four bread, four milk:—but in this city I find every luxury, even pine-apples and *potatoes*.” He mentions having declined every honour that was offered him at Petersburg, even that of a soldier to attend him on his journey; and says, that he will not leave Moscow till he has made repeated visits to the prisons and hospitals, since the first man in the kingdom had assured him, that  
his

his publication would be translated into Russian.

The year 1782 he employed in another complete survey of the prisons in England, and another journey into Scotland and Ireland. The Irish House of Commons having appointed a gaol-committee, he reported to it the state of several of the prisons in Dublin. Other objects in that island also engaged his attention, of which an account will be given hereafter.

Spain and Portugal yet remained untouched ground. Considering how much the spirit of religious bigotry and civil despotism has thrown these countries back in the progress of modern improvement, much instruction was not to be expected from them; yet the very circumstance

of their difference from the rest of Europe made their systems of police an object of curiosity. He sailed to Lisbon in February 1783, and proceeded thence by land into Spain, passing from Badajos to Madrid, and through Valladolid, Burgos, and Pamplona, to France. From this last country he returned through Flanders and Holland to England. Travelling in Spain is a severe trial of patience to those who have been accustomed to easy conveyance and luxurious indulgences; but Mr. *Howard's* wants were easily satisfied. "The Spaniards (says he, in a letter to the same friend) are very sober, and very honest; and if a traveller can live sparingly, and lie on the floor, he may pass tolerably well through their country." From Lisbon to Madrid he could seldom  
get

get the luxury of milk with his tea; but one morning (he tells his friend) he robbed a kid of two cups of its mother's milk. He remained, however, in perfect health and spirits; and received that mark of attention which he most of all valued, a free access to the prisons of all the cities he visited, by means of letters to the magistrates from Count Campomanes. After a short repose on his return from this tour, he made another journey in the summer of the same year into Scotland and Ireland, and again visited several of the English prisons.

His materials had now once more accumulated to such a mass, as to demand communication to the public. During the last three years his labours had been even greater than in any former

equal period; yet it could not be expected, that the matter absolutely new which he had collected should be proportionally great. It was, however, enough to employ him very closely during several months of the year 1784, in printing an *Appendix*, and a new edition of the main work, in which all the additions were comprized. The Appendix contains all the matter of that of 1780, together with what had since accrued. Of the latter I now proceed to give some account.

Several new houses of correction are described under the head of *Holland*, the country which Mr. *Howard* ever found the most fertile source of instruction in this branch of police. The plan of the large new workhouse of Amsterdam must



be well worth studying, as affording hints for the construction of penitentiary houses. *Germany* has the addition of the prisons of *Hanover* and *Bremen*, a minute account of the great and well regulated workhouse at *Hamburg*, and short notices concerning *Silesia*. Of the northern kingdoms which he now first visited, it may in general be observed, that their models, as well with respect to police, as to mode of living, have been *Holland* and *Germany*; but their poverty, and the rigour of their climate, have made them degenerate in their imitations. In particular, they are extremely deficient in cleanliness and industry. The new articles, therefore, of *Denmark* and *Sweden*, though valuable for the information they contain, yet afford little or nothing

of instruction. The vast Empire of *Russia*, lately emerged from obscurity to take a commanding station in the system of Europe, and governed by uncontrouled power, at present directed by a spirit of magnificent improvement, could not but offer in its institutions various things worthy of notice. Its police respecting criminals, its prisons, hospitals, and places of public education, are briefly mentioned by Mr. *Howard*; but he has found little to propose as an example for other countries. The regulations of the great convent at Petersburg, for the education of female children of the nobility and commoners, are given in detail, and afford some salutary rules for the preservation of the health of young persons, and for promoting habits of cleanliness and temperance.

perance. The plan and description of a magazine for medicinal herbs at Moscow, will be a pleasing novelty to most readers. Mr. *Howard* had been anticipated in his survey of the prisons and hospitals of the northern kingdoms, by that well-informed traveller, Mr. *Coxe*, who published a pamphlet on the subject in 1781, here referred to with commendation. The short head of *Poland* contains little but a testimony to the neglected and wretched state of public institutions in that ill-governed country. All travellers have concurred in similar representations of the whole system of affairs, internal and external, in that unhappy seat of aristocratical tyranny ; so that it may be presumed, there does not exist so determined an enemy of *innovation* as not to rejoice in the change

of constitution which has lately been effected there, by means of the silent and peaceable progress of light and reason.

There are various additional articles under *Flanders*, one of which relates to a great alteration for the worse in the house of correction at Ghent. A once flourishing manufactory carried on in the prison was at an end; and the allowance of victuals to the prisoners was reduced in quantity and quality. In the account of a very offensive prison at Lille, Mr. *Howard* expresses his grateful acknowledgments to Providence for his recovery from a fever caught there of the sick.

The account of *Portugal* is almost confined to the prisons and hospitals of Lisbon; the state of which, upon the whole, does credit to the government. The employ-  
ment

ment of about a thousand vagrant and deserted children in a manufactory, is one of the most observable circumstances.

*Spain*, which has been long distinguished for its charitable establishments, affords likewise in its criminal police many things deserving of attention; though the spirit of rigour and severity is perhaps too apparent, amidst much laudable order and exactness. The house of correction at Madrid, called *San Fernando*, may vie with some of the best regulated institutions of this nature; and the *Hospicio*, a kind of work-house, in which extensive manufactories are carried on, is a good example of the union of employment with confinement. The account of the charitable society of the *Hermanidad del Refugio*, who patrol the streets

streets in the evening, for the purpose of inviting destitute wanderers to a comfortable supper and night's lodging, will excite pleasing sensations in the breast of every lover of humanity. The prisons of the Inquisition, those objects of horror and detestation to every protestant, and now, probably, to most catholics, excited great curiosity in Mr. *Howard*, of which, however, all his efforts could only procure a partial gratification. Yet he has been able to communicate enough concerning those of Valladolid to form a striking picture of terror. On the whole, the predilection he had long entertained for the Spanish character, was not diminished by his visit to the country; nor does he seem to have thought his pains in extending his enquiries to it, ill bestowed. The additional

additional notices in *France* chiefly relate to the Paris hospitals. It is needless to dwell on these, since a very accurate description of them has since been given in a capital work by M. Tenon.

To the account of foreign prisons and hospitals succeeds a fresh survey of the prisoners of war.

The new journies to *Scotland*, now extended as far as Inverness, afford little but censure for the neglect of the prisons in that country. Under *Ireland* are introduced additional remarks on the faults and abuses still observable in the prisons there, notwithstanding a very spirited exertion of the legislature to amend their state, by framing good acts for their regulation. But, “*quid leges sine moribus, &c.*” The horrid effects of that cheap  
poison,

poison, whisky, upon the health and morals of the lower classes in that country, are noticed by Mr. *Howard* with much indignant disgust. A new object of attention occurred to him in the two last visits to Ireland,—the *Protestant Charter Schools*, a noble foundation, but which he found sunk into wretched abuse notwithstanding the patronage and superintendence of the first persons in that kingdom. Erroneous accounts of them, published by a committee, and authorized by being annexed to a printed sermon of a prelate in their favour, were detected by Mr. *Howard* on his visits to some of them, and are exposed with his usual freedom.

Further accounts of the *Hulks* follow. To the remarks on the *Gaol-fever*, Mr.  
*Howard*



*Howard* adds the information, that in 1782 he did not find one person in this kingdom affected with that disease; but that in 1783 he had the mortification to observe several prisons, through original bad construction and neglect, relapsing to their former state. So essential is a plan of constant vigilance and inspection, to counteract the lamentable tendency to abuse in all public institutions! This principle of corruption and decay in every thing human is so incessantly active, that, if not resisted by the timely efforts of reformation, all the contrivances of wisdom against natural and moral evils, would, like the dykes of Holland, perpetually sapped and worn by the force of the elements, fall into irremediable ruin.

The remainder of this volume is taken

up

up with a review of all the English prisons, together with particulars of all the alterations which they had undergone since the last publication. The reader will be gratified in finding, from the number of new prisons, and new buildings and conveniences added to the old, that the counties in general had by no means been deficient in liberal attention to this great object, since it had been brought forward and aided by Mr. *Howard's* indefatigable exertions. At the conclusion, among the *Tables*, is a sketch of general heads of regulations for penitentiary houses, which will be highly useful in suggesting a complete body of rules and orders for such establishments, if ever they should again be thought of in this country.

The

The printing of this copious *Appendix*, together with a complete edition of his *State of the Prisons*, into which all the additions were incorporated, making a large and closely printed quarto volume, occupied much of Mr. *Howard's* time in the year 1784. The remainder of that, and the greater part of the next year, do not appear marked with his public services. They were, I believe, chiefly employed in domestic concerns, of which the choice of a proper place of education for his son, now rising towards manhood, was one that most interested him. But the habitude of carrying on researches into an object, which by long possession had acquired deep root in his mind, together with a new idea, collaterally allied to it, which had struck him, at length impelled

4

him

him once more to engage in the toils and perils of a foreign journey.

He had observed that, notwithstanding the regulations for preserving health in prisons and hospitals, infectious diseases continued occasionally to arise and spread in them: he had also in his travels remarked the great solicitude of several trading nations to preserve themselves from that most destructive of all contagious distempers, *the Plague*; and, at the same time, he was well apprized of the rude and neglected state in which the police of our own country is left respecting that object. Combining these ideas, he thought that a visit to all the principal *Lazarettos*, and to countries frequently attacked by the plague, might afford much information as to the means  
of

of preventing contagion in general, as well as particular instruction concerning establishments for the purpose of guarding against pestilential infection. His intent, therefore, was nothing less, than to plunge into the midst of those dangers which by other men are so anxiously avoided; to search out and confront the great foe of human life, for the sake of recognizing his features, and discovering the most efficacious barriers against his assaults. Who but must be struck with admiration of the firmness of courage, and the ardour of benevolence, which could prompt such a design! As a proof of his own idea of the hazards he was to encounter, it may be mentioned, that he resolved to travel single and unattended; not thinking it justifiable to

permit any of his servants to partake of a danger to which they were not called by motives similar to his own.

It was towards the end of 1785 that *Mr. Howard* set out upon this tour, taking his way through Holland and Flanders, to the south of France. As, from the jealousy and displeasure of the French government, he was not able to obtain permission to visit the establishments there, or even to gain assurance of personal safety, he travelled through the country as an English physician, never took his meals in public, and entrusted his secret only to the protestant ministers. In a letter from Nice to the friend above-mentioned, dated January 30, 1786, he acquaints him with these circumstances, and says, that he was five days at Mar-

feilles

feilles and four at Toulon; and, as it was thought that he could not get out of France by land, he embarked in a Genoese vessel, and was several days striving against wind and tide. They who at present conduct the government of France, I am persuaded, will blush at the idea, that a *Howard* was obliged to conceal his name and purpose while carrying on in their country inquiries which had no other aim than the good of mankind!

From Nice, Mr. *Howard* went to Genoa, Leghorn, and Naples, and to the islands of Malta and Zante. He then sailed to Smyrna, and thence to Constantinople. I have been favoured with a letter of his to Dr. Price from this metropolis, dated June 22, 1786, some ex-

tracts from which I shall present to the reader.

“ After viewing the effects of the earthquake in Sicily, I arrived at Malta, where I repeatedly visited the prisons, hospitals, poor-houses, and lazarettos, as I staid three weeks. From thence I went to Zant: as they are all Greeks, I wished to have some general idea of their hospitals and prisons, before I went into Turkey. From thence, in a foreign ship, I got a passage to Smyrna. Here I boldly visited the hospitals and prisons; but as some accidents happened, a few dying of the plague, several shrunk at me. I came thence about a fortnight ago. As I was in a miserable Turk's boat, I was lucky in a passage of six days and a half. A family arrived just before



before me, had been between two and three months.

“ I am sorry to say some die of the plague about us ; one is just carried before my window ; yet I visit where none of my conductors will accompany me. In some hospitals, as in the lazarettos, and yesterday among the sick slaves, I have a constant headach, but in about an hour after it always leaves me. Sir Robert Ainslie is very kind ; but for the above, and other reasons, I could not lodge in his house. I am at a physician's, and I keep some of my visits a secret.”

He designed to proceed from Constantinople over land to Vienna ; but, having determined, upon reflection, to obtain by personal experience the fullest

information of the mode of performing quarantine, he returned to Smyrna, where the plague then was, for the purpose of going to Venice with a *foul bill*, that would necessarily subject him to the utmost rigour of the process. His voyage was tedious, and rendered hazardous by equinoctial storms; and in the course of it he incurred a danger of another kind, the ship in which he was a passenger being attacked by a Tunisian corsair, which, after a smart skirmish, was beaten off by the execution done by a cannon loaded with spike nails and bits of iron, and pointed by Mr. *Howard* himself. It afterwards appeared to have been the intention of the captain to blow up his vessel, rather than submit to be taken into perpetual slavery. It was not till the

close

close of 1786 that Mr. *Howard* left his disagreeable quarters in the lazaretto of Venice, in which his health and spirits suffered considerably. Thence he went by Trieste to Vienna. In this capital he had the honour of a private conference with the Emperor, which was conducted with the utmost ease and condescension on the part of Joseph II. and equal freedom on the part of the Englishman. A relation of this instructive scene in his own words, will, I doubt not, be agreeable to the reader: "The Emperor desired to see me, and I had the honour of a private audience with him of above an hour and a half. He took me by the hand three times in conversation, and thanked me for the visit. He afterwards told our Ambassador, 'That his

K 4

country-

countryman spoke well for prisoners, that he used no flowers, which others ever do, and mean nothing.\* But his greatest favour to me was his immediate alterations for the relief of the prisoners.\* That the late Emperor had an ardent zeal for improvement of every kind, and a strong desire of promoting the prosperity of his subjects, will scarcely be denied, even by those who are the severest censurers of the mode in which he conducted his plans, and his extreme mutability respecting them. He will also be honoured, for the readiness with which he laid aside the etiquette of his rank, on every occasion where it obstructed him in the acquisition of knowledge, or the activity of exertion. Mr.

\* Letter to Mr. Smith.

*Howard*

*Howard* returned through Germany and Holland, and arrived safe in England early in 1787.

It was during this tour, and while he was in solitude occupying a cell of the Venice lazaretto, that he received from England two pieces of intelligence, both of which distressed and harassed his mind, though the emotion they excited must apparently have been very different. One of these related to the melancholy derangement of mind into which his son had fallen, and which, after various instances of strange and unaccountable behaviour, terminated at length in decided insanity. They who cannot believe that the most benevolent of mankind could be a stern and unnatural parent,

parent, will sympathize in the anguish he must have felt on hearing (and in such a situation too) of an event which blasted the dearest hopes of comfort and solace in his declining years. I, who have frequently heard him speak of this son, with all the pride and affection of the kind father of an only child, cannot read without strong emotions, the expressions he uses in writing to his friend relative to this bitter calamity. When he concludes a long letter upon various topics, with the exclamation, "But, O! my son, my son!" I seem to perceive the efforts of a manly mind, striving by the aid of its internal resources to dispel a gloomy phantom, which was yet ever recurring to his imagination. But in this emergency,

emergency, as in all others, the consolations of religion were his chief refuge\*.

The other cause of uneasiness by which his mind was agitated, will, to many, appear a very extraordinary one; since it arose from a testimony of esteem and veneration in his countrymen, which might be imagined to afford balm for his wounded spirit. During his absence,

\* To prove that Mr. *Howard* had kind and tender feelings for *domestic* as well as for *public* occasions, will, I hope, by most persons be deemed a superfluous task. For those who require such proof, I copy the following passage from one of his letters to Mr. Smith. "My old servants, John Prole, Thomas Thomason, and Joseph Crockford, have had a sad time. I hear they have been faithful, wise, and prudent. Please to thank them particularly in my name for their conduct. Two of them, I am persuaded, have acted out of regard to his excellent mother,—who, I rejoice, is *dead*."

a scheme

a scheme had been set on foot to honour him in a manner almost unprecedented in this age and country. Without attempting to trace it to its origin, it may suffice to say, that, in a periodical work of extensive circulation, the public were called upon to testify their respect for Mr. *Howard* by a subscription, for the purpose of erecting a statue, or some other monument, to his honour. The authors of this scheme, though, doubtless, actuated by a pure and laudable admiration of illustrious virtue, yet must have been totally unacquainted with Mr. *Howard's* disposition; otherwise they would never have thought of decorating a man, whose characteristic feature had always been a solicitude to shun all notice and distinction, with one of the

most



most glaring and prominent marks of public applause, which might put to the blush modesty of a much less delicate texture than his. The English national character (if national character can be said to belong to so heterogeneous a people) is by nothing so strongly marked, as by a coyness and reserve which shrink from observation, and even to those who are acting for the public, render the gaze of the public eye painful. The love of glory, which is so active a sentiment to some of our neighbours, operates feebly upon us: many do not rise to it, and some go beyond it. That "humble Allen," whose disposition it was to "do good by stealth and blush to find it fame," was a genuine English philanthropist; and such was Mr. Howard,

rendered,

rendered, perhaps, still more averse to public praise, by a deep sense of religious humility.

A similar want of acquaintance with Mr. *Howard's* designs, caused the proposers of this plan to attribute to him an *extravagance* of philanthropy, which could not but appear ridiculous to those whose judgment was not dazzled by the ardour of admiration. It was asserted, among real topics of applause, that he was now gone abroad with the view of extirpating the plague from Turkey; an idea scarcely so rational, the character of that nation considered, as would be that of a mission to convert the Grand Seignior to Christianity. Mr. *Howard* meant, undoubtedly, to do all the good which should lie within his compass in

that,

that, as in all other countries which he visited; but he was never so romantic as to suppose that he could effect that, which would manifestly require a total change in the religious and political system of a great empire, of all the least disposed to change.

The project of a statue, however, was eagerly adopted; the subscription filled, and was adorned with the names of ministers, nobles, and persons of distinction; and a committee was appointed to determine upon the best mode of fulfilling its purpose. The confidential friends of Mr. *Howard* were in a disagreeable dilemma; for as, on the one hand, they could not but rejoice in the warmth of admiration which his country testified for his character; so, on the other, they well  
knew

knew that its manner of display could not fail to give him extreme pain, and, if effected, probably banish him for ever. On this account, they did not concur in the scheme, and some of them ventured publicly to throw out objections to it. Some of its warm promoters, in reply, talked of *forcing his modesty*, and seemed determined at all events to put in execution their favourite design. In the mean while, Mr. *Howard* was informed of this *honourable persecution* that was preparing against him at home; and the sensations this intelligence occasioned in his breast are shewn in the following expressions contained in a letter to the intimate friend who has already furnished me with various extracts. “ To hasten to the other very distressing affair: oh, why

why could not my friends, who know how much I detest such parade, have stopped such a hasty measure!—As a private man, with some peculiarities, I wished to retire into obscurity and silence.—Indeed, my friend, I cannot bear the thought of being thus dragged out. I immediately wrote, and hope something may be done to stop it. My best friends must disapprove it. It deranges and confounds all my schemes—my exaltation is my fall, my misfortune \*.” The same

\* He mentions in the same letter, as a proof how opposite his wishes were to monumental honours, that before he set out on this journey, he had given directions, that in case of his death, his funeral expences should not exceed ten pounds—that his tomb should be a plain slip of marble placed under that of his dear Henrietta in Cardington church, with this inscription; *John Howard, died—aged—My hope is in Christ.*

L

sentiments

sentiments on this business are expressed with equal strength in his letters to Dr. Price. Among other things he says, "My truest, intimate, and best friends, have, I see by the papers, been so kind as not to subscribe to what you so justly term a *hasty measure*. Indeed, indeed, if nothing now can be done, I speak *from my heart*, never poor creature was more dragged out in public."

That in all this there was no affectation, clearly appeared from the letter he sent to the subscribers; in which, after expressing his gratitude, he displayed so determined a repugnance against admitting of the proposed honour, deprecating it as the severest of punishments, that nothing could be urged in reply, and the business

business was dropped. Of the sum subscribed, amounting to upwards of 1500*l*. Mr. *Howard* refused to direct the disposal in any manner, and begged it might no longer be termed the *Howardian fund*. A part of it was reclaimed by the subscribers, but a considerable share remained in a stock; and, since Mr. *Howard's* death, it has been resolved to employ it in conferring those honours on his *memory* which he would not accept while living. This intention is in every respect strictly proper; and, as the noble edifice of St. Paul's is at length destined to receive national monuments, no commencement can be more auspicious, than with a name which will ever stand so distinguished among those,

Qui sui memores alios fecêre merendo.

To resume the narrative of Mr. *Howard's* public life:—After his return in 1787, he took a short repose, and then went over to Ireland, and visited most of the county gaols and charter schools, and came back by Scotland. In 1788 he renewed his visit to Ireland, and completed his survey of its gaols, hospitals, and schools. I shall lay before the reader part of a letter to Dr. Price, dated from Dublin, March 23, of this year.

“ My journey into this country was to make a report of the state of the charter schools, which charity has been long neglected and abused; as indeed most public institutions are made private emoluments, one sheltering himself under the name of a bishop, another under that of a lord; and for electioneering interest



breaking down all barriers of honour and honesty. However, Parliament now seems determined to know how its grants have been employed. I have, since my visits to these schools in 1782, been endeavouring to excite the attention of Parliament; and some circumstances being in my favour, a good Lord Lieutenant, a worthy Secretary (an old acquaintance), and the First Secretary of State, the Provost, a steady friend, I must still pursue it; so I next week set out for Connaught and other remote parts of this kingdom, which indeed are more barbarous than Russia. By my frequent journies my strength is somewhat abated, but not my courage or zeal in the cause I am engaged in." During these two years, he likewise repeated his examina-

tion of all the county gaols, most of the bridewels, and the infirmaries and hospitals of England, and of the hulks on the Thames, at Portsmouth and Plymouth\*.

The

\* It was, I believe, during his absence in some of the tours of this period, that an incident happened which the reader, I hope, will think well worth relating. A very respectable-looking elderly gentleman on horseback, with a servant, stopt at the inn nearest Mr. *Howard's* house at Cardington, and entered into conversation with the landlord concerning him. He observed, that characters often appeared very well at a distance, which could not bear close inspection; he had therefore come to Mr. *Howard's* residence in order to satisfy himself concerning him. The gentleman then, accompanied by the innkeeper, went to the house, and looked through it, with the offices and gardens, which he found in perfect order. He next enquired into Mr. *Howard's* character as a landlord, which was justly represented; and several neat houses which he had built for his tenants were shewn him. The gentleman returned to his inn, declaring himself now satisfied with the truth of all he had heard about *Howard*. This respectable  
stranger

The great variety of matter collected in these journies was methodized and put to the press in 1789. It composes a quarto volume, beautifully printed, and decorated with a number of fine plates, which, as usual, are *presented* to the public; and so eager were the purchasers of books to partake of the donation, that all the copies were almost immediately bought up. The title is, *An account of the principal Lazarettos in Europe, with various papers relative to the Plague; together with further observations on some foreign Prisons and Hospitals; with additional remarks on the present state of those in Great*

stranger was no other than *Lord Monboddo*; and Mr. *Howard* was much flattered with the visit, and praised his Lordship's good sense in taking such a method of coming at the truth, since he thought it worth his trouble.

*Britain and Ireland.* Of this work I shall proceed to give a brief analysis.

The first section relates to *Lazarettos*, beginning with that of Marseilles, in which city the horrid ravages of the plague, within the present century, have left strong impressions of dread of that destroyer of mankind. Those of Genoa, Leghorn, Malta, Zante, Venice, and Trieste follow; the descriptions of which are illustrated by excellent views and plans\*. Of the lazarettos of Venice a very particular account is given, comprising the mode of reception which he

\* In one of his letters, Mr. *Howard* mentions having met with a young Frenchman going to the academy at Rome, who for a few sequins thankfully worked under his eye, so that he can attest the accuracy of his draughts. Several of the plates were engraved in Holland.

himself

himself experienced, the regulations of every kind, respecting officers and their duty, visitation of ships, manner of performing quarantine, and the expurgation of goods of all classes, &c. All these appear to have been devised with much judgment and prudence; but Mr. *Howard* is obliged to give testimony to various instances of abuse and neglect, which greatly impair the utility of this institution, as well as of many others in that once celebrated and potent republic.

*Seçt. II.* contains *proposed regulations, and a new plan for a lazaretto*; followed by observations on the importance of such an establishment in England. In these are introduced two letters on the subject to Mr. *Howard*; one, a long and argumentative

argumentative one from the English merchants residing at Smyrna; the other, confirming their opinion, from those of Salonica. These commercial papers appear worthy of the most serious attention; and indeed it is wonderful that a nation which boasts of good sense and knowledge, should so long have remained patient under a police respecting this matter, which answers no effectual purpose of security, but seems only calculated to discourage commerce, and produce fees to persons in office, by the most barefaced impositions \*.

*Seet. III. consists of papers relative to*

\* Such is the negligence and absurdity respecting the regulations of the quarantine of *persons*, that I have been assured, a naval officer has been called out of the Opera-house, to go on board his ship and perform his quarantine.

*the*

*the plague.* They commence with a set of answers, by different medical practitioners, to queries with which Mr. *Howard* was furnished by the late Dr. *Jebb* and myself. I must observe, however, that all the queries do not appear, some of them having been misapprehended, or imperfectly answered, particularly such as related to the discrimination of other fevers of the *typhus* genus from the plague. These replies will probably be thought to add little to the stock of knowledge we possessed respecting this disease; yet it is of some importance, that the leading facts on which all modes of preservation must be founded, *viz.* that the plague is not known to arise spontaneously *any where*, but is always to be traced to *contagion*; and that the distance  
to

to which its infection extends, through the atmosphere is very small, are established in them by general agreement. The “Abstract of a curative and preservative method to be observed in Pef-tilential Contagions,” communicated from the Office of Health in Venice to the court of Russia; and the “Abridged Relation of the Plague of Spalato in Dalmatia, in 1784” (both extracted from the Italian originals by myself), are the other papers in this section. In the latter, the medical reader will be struck with the equivocal nature of the symptoms supposed to discriminate this disease, and the very gradual progress from suspicion to certainty as to its presence.

*Señ. IV. relates to foreign Prisons and Hospitals.*



*Hospitals.* The employment of the gally-slaves in the arsenal of Toulon, is the most observable circumstance relative to the south of *France*. Under *Italy* there is a pleasing account of the improvements at Florence, in consequence of the humane attention of the Grand Duke (Leopold, the present Emperor). This prince, besides other instances of liberal favour to Mr. *Howard's* inquiries, caused a copy of his new code of laws to be presented to him, of which, on his return, Mr. *Howard* had a translation printed, and distributed among the heads of the law and other persons, in and out of parliament. Of the Grand Duke Mr. *Howard* never spoke without the warmest expressions of gratitude and respect, calling him a glorious prince, and declaring that no-  
 thing

thing could exceed his attention to whatever might promote the happiness and prosperity of his people. It is earnestly to be wished, that the same regard to the principles of justice and humanity may accompany him in the very elevated station which is now assigned him by Providence.

*Malta*, that celebrated seat of piracy, dignified by the spirit of chivalry and devotion, affords a new and curious article. Its great hospital, which boasts of lodging the sick in a palace, and serving them in plate, is here described by one whose penetrating eye could distinguish between parade and comfort; and it undergoes some severe censure. Mr. *Howard* visited it *before* he delivered his letter of recommendation from Sir W. Hamilton

to the Grand Master, as well as frequently as rewards.

The *Turkish dominions*, whence all light, liberty, and public spirit, are most effectually excluded, could not be expected to yield instruction in police to Europe. Yet debtors and felons are there confined in separate prisons, a refinement to which this country is not yet entirely arrived. The hospitals in the great commercial city of Smyrna seem all to belong to the Franks, Greeks, and Jews. Even at Constantinople the Turks have few hospitals, and those in a wretched state. The hospitals for lunatics there, are, indeed, examples of admirable construction, but neglected in their management. Yet, amidst this disregard of the human species, Mr. *How-*

*ard*

ard found an *asylum for cats*. Such are the contradictions of man!

The institutions of *Vienna* shew that singular mixture of clemency and rigour, of care and neglect, that might be expected from the indecisive character of the sovereign. The perpetual confinement of criminals in dark, damp dungeons, as a substitute for capital punishment, manifestly appears to be as little an advantage on the side of lenity, as it is on that of public utility. The much beaten ground of *Holland* still affords new observations, particularly respecting the legal process for debt, in use there.

*Sett. V.* relates to *Scotland*; and what is new chiefly regards the charitable institutions of *Edinburgh*. As to the prisons

sons there, Mr. *Howard* was obliged to remark to the Lord Provost, “ that the splendid improvements carrying on in their places of entertainment, streets, squares, bridges, &c. seemed to occupy all the attention of the gentlemen in office, to the total neglect of this essential branch of the police.” This weighty animadversion deserves serious notice, as a strong confirmation of those charges against the spirit of luxury, which various modern philosophers have been fond of turning into ridicule. In fact, a spirit which increases personal wants and indulgences, and augments the distance between the higher and lower orders of society, cannot but interfere with the duties, as well of charity, as of justice, which are owing to our fellow-creatures

of every condition. The arts of luxury may promote knowledge, and this may secondarily be employed with advantage on objects of general utility; but it is not likely that the same persons whose minds are occupied with schemes of splendor and elegant amusement, should bestow attention on the coarse and disgusting offices annexed to the care of the poor and miserable.

The subject of *Seet. VI.* is the *Irish Prisons and Hospitals*. Mr. Howard observed a very liberal and humane spirit with respect to prisons, prevailing among the gentlemen of that country, displayed in the erection of many new gaols, the plans of which, however, he could not approve. The evils occasioned by the use of spirituous liquors, particularly ap-  
parent

parent in Ireland, draw from him much complaint and censure. It is a shocking consideration that the interest of the revenue should, in this matter, be suffered to prevail over the good of the nation; and nothing can deserve severer animadversion, than the conduct of those *servants of the public*, the commissioners of excise, who presume to grant licences to tippling houses in villages, contrary to the declared wish and opinion of gentlemen who reside on the spot, and are witnesses of their fatal consequences to the health and morals of the neighbourhood. This is indeed, reversing the order of civil government, and elevating subaltern interests to ruling principles. All the hospitals in Dublin are noticed by Mr. *Howard*, with remarks. He then

proceeds to a survey of all the county gaols and hospitals in the kingdom. The county hospitals are in fact national institutions, maintained in great part by the county rates and king's letter, and therefore are not so exactly superintended as those in England, which depend upon private subscription for their support. The consequence of this is shewn in the wretched state in which the greater part of them were found, the abodes of filth, hunger, neglect, and every species of abuse. Yet a spirit of improvement was beginning to operate among them, to which this free statement of their defects would, doubtless, much contribute.

*SECT. VII.* is devoted to an account of the *Charter-schools* in Ireland. The public



lic detection of misrepresentations and abuses in this great national object had excited the attention of several of the leading men; and Mr. *Howard* had been desired to lay his observations before the committee of fifteen in Dublin, who have the superintendence of them. He also made a report of their state before the Irish House of Commons; and, having entered heartily into the subject, he resolved to give it a thorough investigation. He therefore extended his visits to the whole of them, in number thirty-eight, and to the four provincial nurseries from which they are supplied. The result of his observations is here given, with free censures of defects, and candid acknowledgments of improvement. He concludes the account with some general re-

marks on the institution, and some hints for rendering it more useful; and, after expressing a wish, that the benefits of education were more generally extended over Ireland than they can be by those schools, he displays the enlarged liberality of his mind in the following sentence, which contains a maxim worthy of being written in letters of gold. “I hope I shall not be thought, as a Protestant dissenter, indifferent to the Protestant cause, when I express my wish, that these distinctions [between Catholic and Protestant] were less regarded in bestowing the advantages of education; and that the increase of Protestantism were chiefly trusted to the dissemination of *knowledge* and *sound morals*.”

This section is concluded, with an example

ample strikingly illustrative of the ease with which education may be extended to the whole body of poor, afforded by the trustees of the blue-coat-hospital in Chester, whose report of their plan and its success is here copied: and also, with the rules of the Quaker's-school at Ackworth, excellently adapted to promote that decent and regular deportment in youth which Mr. *Howard* so much admired. Ireland has reason to think herself peculiarly indebted to him for his laborious investigations and free remarks on her public institutions. No country certainly wanted them more; and none, I believe, is better disposed to profit by them. She has not been ungrateful to her benefactor (*that* was never her character), for in no country is the memory of Mr. *Howard* more re-

vered. During his journies there, several of the principal towns presented him with their freedom; and the University of Dublin, with great liberality, conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Mr. *Howard's* aversion to all kinds of distinction, and the natural dislike of changing his usual designation at an advanced age, prevented him from publicly assuming this respectable title.

*Seet. VIII.* relates to *English Prisons and Hospitals*. The prisons are all specified in the order of the former works, with such remarks as the alterations made in them, and other circumstances, suggested. Many of the descriptions of hospitals are new, particularly an account of all the hospitals for the sick in the metropolis.

metropolis. It is probable that few institutions of the kind in Europe are better conducted than these; yet there are defects, both general and particular, which Mr. *Howard* has briefly pointed out, and which claim the attention of those who are really interested in the utility of these noble charities, and do not consider them merely as subservient to private emolument. In a note under the county gaol in Southwark, he mentions in strong terms of pity and indignation the state of fifty felons, sentenced for transportation in the course of the preceding five years, and kept in the most wretched condition till an opportunity should offer of putting their sentence in execution. This necessary delay of punishment must ever be a strong objection

objection to the scheme of distant banishment, and gives a decided preference, both in justice and policy, to the plan of penitentiary houses, so thoughtlessly abandoned for the Botany-bay settlement. The *injustice*, indeed, of the intermediate confinement, is lessened by an act of 24th Geo. III. which directs, that all the time during which a convict shall have continued in gaol under sentence of transportation, shall be deducted out of the term of his transportation. Still, however, such confinement is a *different*, and, in these circumstances, a *much worse*, punishment, than that to which they are sentenced.

The county bridewel at Reading occasions a note which deserves particular attention. Mr. *Howard* has been supposed

the peculiar patron of *solitary confinement*, and his recommendation has caused it to be adopted in various places, but to a degree beyond his intentions. He well knew, from manifold observation, that human nature could not endure, for a long time, confinement in perfect solitude, without sinking under the burden. He had seen the most desperate and refractory in foreign countries tamed by it; he therefore proposed in our own prisons a *temporary* treatment of this kind, as the most effectual, yet lenient, mode of subduing the ferocity of our criminals: but he never thought of its being made the sentence of offenders during the *whole term* of their imprisonment; such being not only extreme and scarcely justifiable severity, but inconsistent

sistent with the design of reclaiming them to habits of industry by hard labour. He, indeed, universally approved of *nocturnal solitude*, as affording an opportunity for serious reflection, and preventing those plans of mischief, and mutual encouragements to villainy, which are certain to take place among criminals, when left to herd together, without inspection.

The employment of convicts in building a new county gaol at Oxford, with their general good behaviour in it, affords an example of the possibility and probable good effect of occupying them in useful labour *at home*.

The *fever wards* of the Chester infirmary are very properly noticed, as a spirited instance of extending relief to  
persons



persons suffering under a dangerous and infectious disease, and, by proper regulations, rendering the contagion harmless to others. I am persuaded, that the plague itself, thus managed, might be prevented from communicating itself even to those under the same roof with it. Mr. *Howard* was happy to find in this city a character congenial with his own in the ardour of active benevolence, and distinguished by various successful plans for the public good. To the medical reader, as well as to many others, it will be unnecessary to mention the name of Dr. *Haygarth*.

A particular account of all the *bulks* is given at the end of the English gaols. The condition of these floating bridewells was improved in several respects since  
Mr.

Mr. *Howard's* former visits; but, if considered in any other light than as *temporary* places of confinement till some better plan is adopted, they are liable to many objections, which are here stated.

*Remarks on Penitentiary Houses* follow.

In these the writer states his ideas concerning their nature and object, gives the reasons which induced Dr. Fothergill and himself to fix on the situation of Islington, and relates his resignation of the office of Supervisor, as formerly mentioned. The *general heads of regulations* proposed for such houses in the last Appendix, are here reprinted; and a plate is added explanatory of the plan of building he approves. It is on every account to be lamented, that Mr. *Howard* should not have had the satisfaction of seeing  
 one

one of his favourite designs, the subject of his most laborious research and maturest reflection, carried into execution. The objection of expence was surely unworthy of a country like this, whose prosperity and resources are so magnificently displayed, when the provinces of Holland, petty states of Germany, and cantons of Switzerland, have not been afraid of incurring it. Whether the preferred scheme of *colonizing with convicts at the Antipodes*, has the advantage of it in this respect, the public are now pretty well able to determine.

In the remarks on the *gaol-fever*, repeated with a little variation from the last publication, we are informed, that since 1782, when the prisons of this kingdom were entirely free from this disease, several

several fatal and alarming instances of it had occurred. Its appearance and frequency will probably much depend upon the epidemic constitution of the year, as long as its occasional causes continue to subsist; but that proper care and regulations in prisons might almost entirely extirpate these causes, there seems no reason to doubt.

The *conclusion* expresses the writer's satisfaction in that humane and liberal spirit which has so much alleviated the distress of prisoners; but laments, that here its exertions seem to stop, and that little or nothing is done towards that most important object, the *reformation* of offenders. From close observation he is convinced, that the *vice of drunkenness* is the root of all the disorders of our prisons,  
and

and that some effectual means to eradicate it are necessary, if we mean to preserve the health and amend the morals of prisoners. Mr. *Howard* therefore subjoins, as his final legacy towards the improvement of this branch of police, the *draught of a bill* for the better regulation of gaols, and the prevention of drunkenness and rioting in them. Of this, the leading clauses are framed for the purpose of absolutely prohibiting the entrance of *any liquor* into a gaol, except *milk, whey, buttermilk, and water*, unless in case of sickness and medical prescription. He was fully sensible that, in this free living country, the denial of even small beer would be deemed a species of cruelty; and he doubted not that it would go far to lose him, in the popular estimation, the title

of the *Prisoner's Friend*: but as attaining a popularity of that kind was not his original object, so he could bear to forfeit it, while conscious of still pursuing the real good of those unhappy people. Being convinced from experience, that there was no medium in this matter, and that if strong liquors were at all admitted into prisons, no bounds could be set to their use, he thought it right to deny an indulgence to a few, for the sake of the essential advantage of the many. Debtors, then, while the same place of confinement serves for them and felons, must be subjected to the same restraints. And, to take off the objection of the hardship this would impose upon *innocent debtors*, it was greatly his wish, that such alterations should take place in our law for debt,

debt, that none but *fraudulent debtors* should be liable to imprisonment, who, he justly observes, are really *criminals*. He supposes that the gentlemen of the faculty will condemn the total rejection of fermented liquors from the diet of prisoners, under the notion of their being useful as antiseptics ; and I confess I was one who pleaded with him on this subject : but he answered me with arguments which he has here stated, and they are worthy of consideration. After all, many will suppose, that in his feelings, both with respect to these privations, and to his proposed indulgences of tea, and other vegetable articles, he was in some measure under the influence of his own peculiar habits of life ; so natural is it for our judgment of particulars to be warped,

when our general principles remain fixed and unaltered. The *draught of a bill* will, I presume, appear in most respects excellent; and the great purpose of preserving sobriety in gaols, cannot, surely, be too much insisted on.

Mr. *Howard's* leading ideas on this subject were formed some years before.

In May 1787, the Lord Chancellor, in an excellent speech on a proposed Insolvent Bill, after discussing the point of imprisonment for debt, and the nature of such bills, proceeded to some considerations respecting the management and discipline of our prisons. He said, "he had lately had the honour of a conversation upon the subject, with a gentleman who was, of all others, the best qualified to treat of it—he meant, Mr. *Howard*,

whose



whose humanity, great as it was, was at least equalled by his wisdom; for a more judicious, or a more sensible reasoner upon the topic, he never had conversed with. His own ideas had been turned to solitary imprisonment and a strict regimen, as a punishment for debt; and that notion had exactly corresponded with Mr. *Howard's*, who had agreed with him, that the great object ought to be, when it became necessary to seclude a man from society, and imprison him for debt, to take care that he came out of prison no worse a man in point of health and morals than he went in." His Lordship afterwards recited a story which Mr. *Howard* had told him, in proof of the corruption and licentiousness of our prisons. A Quaker, he said, called upon

him to go with him and witness a scene which, if he were to go singly, would, he feared, be too much for his feelings : it was, to visit a friend in distress—a person who had lately gone into the King's-bench prison. When they arrived, they found the man half-drunk, playing at fives. Though greatly shocked at the circumstance, they asked him to go with them to the coffee-room, and take a glass of wine. He refused, saying he had drank so much punch, that he could not drink wine—however, he would call in upon them before they went away.

Mr. *Howard* and his friend returned, with feelings very different from those with which they entered the place, but not less painful.

The volume concludes with several  
curious

curious and valuable *tables*, which will probably be used for reference at future distant periods. The enumeration of all the prisoners in England at his visits in 1787 and 1788, shews an alarming increase, though in some measure to be accounted for, from a long suspension of the usual transportation. They amount to 7482.

Mr. *Howard* remained but a short time at home after the printing of this work. In the conclusion of it he had declared his intention “again to quit his native country, for the purpose of revisiting Russia, Turkey, and some other countries, and extending his tour in the east.” The reason he has assigned for this determination, is, “a serious deliberate conviction that he was pursuing

the path of his duty;" and it cannot be doubted, that this consideration was now, as it ever had been, his leading principle of action. But if it be asked, what was his more peculiar object in this new journey, no decisive answer, I believe, can be given, by those who enjoyed the most of his confidence. I had various conversations with him on the subject; and I found rather a wish to have objects of enquiry pointed out to him by others, than any specific views present to his own mind. As, indeed, his purpose was to explore regions entirely new to him, and of which the police respecting his former objects was very imperfectly known to Europe (for the Turkish dominions in Asia, Egypt, and the Barbary coast, were in his plan of travels),

he

he could not doubt that important subjects for observation would offer themselves unsought. With respect to that part of his tour in which he was to go over ground he had already trodden, I conceive that he expected to do good in that *censorial character*, which his repeated publications, known and attended to all over Europe, gave him a right to assume; and which he had before exercised to the great relief of the miserable in various countries. If to these motives be added the long formed habitude of pursuing a certain track of enquiry, and an inquietude of mind proceeding from domestic misfortune, no cause will be left to wonder at so speedy a renewal of his toils and dangers.

He had resolved to go this journey too,  
without

without an attendant; and it was not till after the most urgent and affectionate entreaties, that his servant obtained permission to accompany him. Before he set out, he and his very intimate and highly respected friend, Dr. Price, took a most affectionate and pathetic leave of each other. From the age and infirmities of the one, and the hazards the other was going to encounter, it was the foreboding of each of them that they should never meet again in this world; and their farewell corresponded with the solemnity of such an occasion. The reader's mind will pause upon the parting embrace of two such men; and revere the mixture of cordial affection, tender regret, philosophic firmness, and christian resignation,

tion, which their minds must have displayed.

It was in the beginning of July 1789 that he arrived in Holland. Thence he proceeded through the north of Germany, Prussia, Courland, and Livonia, to St. Petersburg. From this capital he went to Moscow. Some extracts of a letter to Dr. Price dated from this city, September 22, 1789, will, I doubt not, be acceptable, as one of the latest records of his career of benevolence.

“ When I left England, I first stopped at Amsterdam, and proceeded to Osna-  
burgh, Hanover, Brunswick, and Berlin;  
then to Konigsberg, Riga, and Peterf-  
burgh; at all which places I visited the  
prisons and hospitals, which were all  
flung open to me, and in some, the bur-  
gomasters

gomaflers accompanied me into the dungeons, as well as into the other rooms of confinement. I arrived a few days ago in this city, and have begun my rounds. The hospitals are in a sad state. Upwards of feventy thousand failors and recruits died in them laft year. I labour to convey the torch of philanthropy into thefe diftant regions. — I am quite well — the weather clear — the mornings fresh — thermometer 48, but fires not yet begun. I wifh for a mild winter, and then fhall make fome progrefs in my European expedition. My medical acquaintance give me but little hope of efcaping the plague in Turkey. I do not look back, but would readily endure any hardships, and encounter any dangers, to be an honour to my Chriftian profeflion."

From



From Moscow he took his course to the very extremity of European Russia, extended as it now is to the shores of the Black-sea, where long dreary tracts of desert are terminated by some of those new establishments, which have cost such immense profusion of blood and treasure to two vast empires, now become neighbours and perpetual foes. Here, at the distance of 1,500 miles from his native land, he fell a victim to disease, the ravages of which, among unpitied multitudes, he was exerting every effort to restrain. *Finis vitæ nobis luctuosus, amicis tristis, extraneis etiam ignotisque non sine cura!*

From the faithful and intelligent servant who accompanied him (Mr. Thomas Thomason), I have been favoured  
with

with an account of various particulars relative to his last illness, which I shall give to the reader in the form in which I received it.

“The winter being far advanced on the taking of Bender, the commander of the Russian army at that place gave permission to many of the officers to visit their friends at Cherson, as the severity of the season would not admit of a continuance of hostilities against the Turks. Cherson, in consequence, became much crowded; and the inhabitants testified their joy for the success of the Russians by balls and masquerades. Several of the officers, of the inhabitants of Cherson, and of the gentry in the neighbourhood, who attended these balls, were almost immediately afterwards attacked with fevers; and

and it was Mr. *Howard's* idea, that the infection had been brought by the officers from Bender. Amongst the number who caught this contagion was a young lady who resided about sixteen miles from Cherson. When she had been ill some little time, Mr. *Howard* was earnestly requested to visit her. He saw her first on Sunday, December 27. He visited her again in the middle of the week, and a third time on the Sunday following, January 3. On that day he found her sweating very profusely ; and, being unwilling to check this by uncovering her arm, he passed his under the bed-clothes to feel her pulse. While he was doing this, the effluvia from her body were very offensive to him, and it was always his own opinion that he then caught the fever.

She died on the following day. Mr. *Howard* was much affected by her death, as he had flattered himself with hopes of her amendment. From January 3d to the 8th he scarcely went out\* ; but on that day he went to dine with Admiral Montgwinoff, who lived about a mile and a half from his lodgings. He staid later than usual ; and when he returned, found himself unwell, and thought he had something of the gout flying about him. He immediately took some Sal Volatile in a little tea, and thought himself better till three or four on Saturday morning, when feeling not so well, he repeated the Sal Volatile. He got up in the morning,

\* There seems some mistake here, as there is a full report in his memorandums, of a visit to the hospitals in Cherson, dated January 6.

and

and walked out; but, finding himself worse, soon returned and took an emetic. On the following night he had a violent attack of fever, when he had recourse to his favourite remedy, James's powder, which he regularly took every two or four hours till Sunday the 17th. For though Prince Potemkin sent his own physician to him, immediately on being acquainted with his illness, yet his own prescriptions were never interfered with during this time. On the 12th he had a kind of fit, in which he suddenly fell down, his face became black, his breathing difficult, and he remained insensible for half an hour. On the 17th he had another similar fit. On the 18th he was seized with hiccuping, which continued on the next day, when he took some musk

draughts by direction of the physician. About seven o'clock on Wednesday morning, the 20th of January, he had another fit, and died in about an hour after. He was perfectly sensible during his illness, except in the fits, till within a very few hours of his death. This event he all along expected to take place; and he often said, that he had no other wish for life than as it gave him the means of relieving his fellow-creatures.

During his illness he received a letter from a friend, who mentioned having lately seen his son at Leicester, and expressed his hopes that Mr. *Howard* would find him better on his return to England. When this account was read to him, it affected him much. His expressions of pleasure were particularly strong, and he  
often

often desired his servant, if ever by the blessing of God, his son was restored, to tell him how much he prayed for his happiness. He made a will\* on the Thursday before he died; and was buried, at his own request, at the villa of M. Dauphiné, about eight miles from Cherson, where a monument is erected over his grave. He made the observation, that he should here be at the same distance from heaven, as if brought back to England. While in Cherson, he saw the accounts of the demolition of the Bastille, which seemed to afford him a very particular pleasure; and he thought it possible, the account he had himself pub-

\* This must probably have been only some directions to his executors, as his will is dated in 1787.

lished of it, might have contributed to this event."

On this relation, the general exactness of which may, I doubt not, be fully relied on, I shall only make a medical remark or two. Notwithstanding Mr. *Howard's* conviction of having caught the contagion from the young lady, I think the distance of time between his last visit to her and his own seizure, makes the fact dubious. Contagion thus sensibly received, usually, I believe, operates in a less period than five days\*. Perhaps his visit to the hospitals on the 6th, or his late return from the Admiral's on the 8th, in a cold season and

\* According to Dr. *Lind*, its effects, shivering and sickness, are instantaneous. See *Dissert. on Fevers and Infection*. Chap. ii. sect. I.



unwholesome climate, will better account for it. The nature of his complaint is not very clear, for it is very uncommon for the senses to remain entire till the last, in a fever of the low or putrid kind; nor are fits, resembling epileptic attacks, among the usual symptoms of such a disease. That a wandering gout might make part of his indisposition, is not very improbable, as it was a disorder to which he was constitutionally liable, though his mode of living prevented any severe paroxysms of it. At any rate, his disease was certainly attended with debility of the vital powers, and therefore the long and frequent use of James's powders must have been prejudicial. And I think it highly probable, that Mr. *Howard's* name may be added to the numerous list of

those, whose lives have been sacrificed to the empirical use of a medicine of great activity, and therefore capable of doing much harm as well as good.

It was Mr. *Howard's* written request, that his papers should be corrected and fitted for publication by Dr. Price and myself. The declining state of health of Dr. Price\*, has caused the business to devolve

\* Whilst I am engaged in this work, Dr. PRICE has followed his friend to the grave. A character so illustrious will, doubtless, have all justice done it by some pen qualified to display its various merits. May I be permitted, however, to take this occasion of mingling my regrets with those of his other friends and admirers, and offering a small tribute to the memory of one of the most excellent of men! Though during life the advanced station he occupied in political controversy rendered his name as obnoxious to some, as it was cherished and revered by others, yet now he is gone to that place  
where

devolve solely on me, and I have executed it to the best of my power. Little was requisite to be done to the greatest part, which he had himself copied out fair. The rest was with some difficulty to be compiled out of detached and broken memorandums; but in these his own words are as much as possible preserved.

where all worldly differences are at an end, it may be hoped, that the liberal of all denominations will concur, in respecting a long course of years spent in the unremitted application of eminent abilities and acquirements, to the promotion of what he regarded as the greatest good of his fellow-creatures. A character in which were combined simplicity of heart, with depth of understanding,—ardent love of truth, with true Christian charity and humility;—high zeal for the public interests, with perfect freedom from all private views; cannot be ultimately injured by the petulance of wit, or the invectives of eloquence. Dr. Price's reputation as a moralist, philosopher, and politician, may safely be committed to impartial posterity.

Of this Supplement I shall give a general account, as I have done of the former parts of his works.

The order and regularity of *Holland* still afford useful descriptions, and some of the abuses which even there had crept in, seem to have been corrected since Mr. *Howard's* visits. The friend to humanity has yet, however, to lament the continued use of the torture there, to force confession. The state of the prisons in *Osnaburgh*, *Hanover*, and *Brunswick*, is again dwelt upon with some minuteness, obviously because the writer thought there was some probability of his attracting, in a more peculiar manner, the notice of those who have the power of remedying their defects. Who will not sympathize with him in the disappointment  
he

he expresses in this instance, and bewail the strange fatality by which the utmost barbarity of the torture is retained in the dominions of a mild and enlightened Sovereign, whose interposition could not but be efficacious in suppressing it!

At *Berlin* and *Spandau* the institutions appear to preserve the good order in which they were left by the Great Frederic. *Königsberg* seems to shew the neglect incident to places distant from the seat of government. In a note under this place, Mr. *Howard* makes an acknowledgment of the attention with which his remarks have been honoured in various foreign countries, and properly adduces it as a reason for his adoption of that cenforial manner of noting abuses, which,

which, in his later journies, he has not scrupled freely to employ.

At *St. Petersburg* he had the pleasure to observe several improvements in the hospitals, probably in great part owing to his own suggestions. Under *Cronstadt* he finds occasion, however, to animadvert upon an alteration in the plan of diet, generally adopted throughout the marine and military hospitals of Russia, which, in his opinion, is highly prejudicial. This alteration consists in changing milk, and various other articles, constituting the usual liquid and middle diet of the sick, for the stronger and less digestible food of men in health. The prisons at *Moscow* seem greatly neglected by those whose office it is to superintend them; but the charity displayed by individuals

dividuals towards the poor wretches confined in them, gave Mr. *Howard* a favourable idea of the humane disposition of the nation, confirmed by what he saw of their manners in his travels.

He now hastened to those scenes, where a destructive war, co-operating with an unwholesome climate, produced such evils, aggravated by neglect and inhumanity, that they gave him no other occupation than to lament and complain. After all the allowances that candour demands, for inevitable wants and hardships in the distant posts of a newly possessed country, and during the height of widely extended military operations, the Russian commanders cannot be vindicated from an inattention to the lives and comforts of their soldiers, greater, as Mr.

*Howard*

*Howard* observes, than he had seen in any other country. Ignorance, abuse, mismanagement, and deficiency, seem at their very summit in the military hospitals of *Cherson*, *Witowka*, and *St. Nicholas*. The lively pictures he has drawn of the distresses he here witnessed, and his pathetic description of the sufferings of the poor recruits, marched from their distant homes to these melancholy regions, must awaken in every feeling breast a warm indignation against the schemes of ambitious despotism, however varnished over with the colouring of glory, or even of national utility. No lesson ought to be more forcibly impressed on mankind, than, that uncontrouled power in one or few, notwithstanding it may occasionally be exercised in splendid and even beneficent



cent designs, is on the whole absolutely inconsistent with the happiness of a people\*. The Empress of Russia's unjust seizure of Lesser and Crim Tartary, has been the cause of miseries not to be calculated, to her own subjects and those of Turkey, and has endangered the tranquillity of all Europe.

I shall conclude this review of the works and public services of Mr. *Howard* with brief annals of his more than Herculean labours, during the last seventeen years of his life.

1773. High-sheriff of Bedfordshire. Visited many county and town gaols.

\* Scilicet ut Turno contingat regia conjunx,  
Nos, animæ viles, inhumata infletaque turba,  
Sternamur campis. *Æn. xi.*

1774.

1774. Completed his survey of English gaols. Stood candidate to represent the town of Bedford.
1775. Travelled to Scotland, Ireland, France, Holland, Flanders, and Germany.
1776. Repeated his visit to the above countries, and to Switzerland. During these two years revisited all the English gaols.
1777. Printed his state of prisons.
1778. Travelled through Holland, Flanders, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and part of France.
1779. Revisited all the counties of England and Wales, and travelled into Scotland and Ireland. Acted as Supervisor of the Penitentiary Houses.

1780.

1780. Printed his first Appendix.

1781. Travelled into Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Germany, and Holland.

1782. Again surveyed all the English prisons, and went into Scotland and Ireland.

1783. Visited Portugal, Spain, France, Flanders, and Holland: also, Scotland and Ireland; and viewed several English prisons.

1784. Printed the second Appendix, and a new edition of the whole works.

1785. From the close of the first of these years, to the beginning of the last, on his tour through  
1786. Holland, France, Italy, Malta,  
1787. Turkey, and Germany. Afterwards, went to Scotland and Ireland.

1788.

1788. Revisited Ireland; and during this and the former year, travelled over all England.

1789. Printed his work on Lazarettos, &c. Travelled through Holland, Germany, Prussia, and Livonia, to Russia and Lesser Tartary.

1790. January 20. Died at Cherson.

Having thus traced the footsteps of this great philanthropist from the cradle to the grave, and followed them with close inspection in that part of his course which comprehends his more public life, it only remains, to assemble those features of character which have been displayed in his actions, and to form them, in conjunction with such minuter strokes as studious observation may have enabled me to

to draw, into a faithful portraiture of the *man*.

The first thing that struck an observer on acquaintance with Mr. *Howard*, was a stamp of extraordinary vigour and energy on all his movements and expressions. An eye lively and penetrating, strong and prominent features, quick gait, and animated gestures, gave promise of ardour in forming, and vivacity in executing his designs\*. At no time of his  
life,

\* Mr. *Howard*, though frequently requested, would never sit for his picture; it is therefore no wonder that the portraits of him, given in various works, should be all totally unlike. The most resembling likeness, by much, is a head sketched by an artist in London, engraved in Dublin, and copied for this work. It is somewhat of a caricature, but has very exactly the expression of his countenance when in a very serious attentive mood. After his death, Prince Potemkin had two plaster casts

P

taken

life, I believe, was he without some object of warm pursuit; and in every thing he pursued, he was indefatigable in aiming at perfection. Give him a hint of any thing he had left short, or any new acquisition to be made, and while you might suppose he was deliberating about it, you were surprised with finding *it was done*. Not Cæsar himself could better exemplify the poet's

Nil actum credens, dum quid superesset agendum.

I remember that, having accidentally remarked to him that amongst the London prisons he had omitted *the Tower*, he was so struck with the deficiency (though

taken from his face, one for himself, the other for the servant of Mr. Howard.

of trifling consequence, since confinement there is so rare), that at his very first leisure he ran to London, and supplied it. Nor was it only during a short period of ardour that his exertions were thus awakened. He had the still rarer quality of being able, for any length of time, to bend all the powers and faculties of his mind to one point, unseduced by every allurements which curiosity or any other affection might throw in his way, and unsusceptible of that satiety and disgust which are so apt to steal upon a protracted pursuit. Though by his early travels he had shewn himself not indifferent to those objects of taste and information which strike the cultivated mind in a foreign country, yet in the tours expressly made for the purpose of examining

prisons and hospitals, he appears to have had eyes and ears for nothing else; at least he suffered no other object to detain him or draw him aside \*. Impressed with the idea of the importance of his designs, and the uncertainty of human life, he was impatient to get as much done as possible within the allotted limits. And in this disposition consisted that *enthusiasm* by which the public supposed him actuated; for otherwise, his cool and steady temper gave no idea of the character usually distinguished by that appellation. He followed his plans, indeed, with wonderful vigour and con-

\* He mentioned being once prevailed upon in Italy, to go and hear some extraordinarily fine music; but, finding his thoughts too much occupied by it, he would never repeat the indulgence.

stancy,



stancy, but by no means with that heat and eagerness, that inflamed and exalted imagination, which denote the enthusiast. Hence, he was not liable to catch at partial representations, to view facts through fallacious mediums, and to fall into those mistakes which are so frequent in the researches of the man of fancy and warm feeling. Some persons, who only knew him by his extraordinary actions, were ready enough to bestow upon him that sneer of contempt, which men of cold hearts and selfish dispositions are so apt to apply to whatever has the shew of high sensibility. While others, who had a slight acquaintance with him, and saw occasional features of phlegm, and perhaps harshness, were disposed to question his feeling altogether, and to

attribute his exertions either merely to a sense of duty, or to habit and humour. But both these were erroneous conclusions. He felt as a man should feel; but not so as to mislead him, either in the estimate he formed of objects of utility, or in his reasonings concerning the means by which they were to be brought into effect. The reformation of abuses, and the relief of misery, were the two great purposes which he kept in view in all his undertakings; and I have equally seen the tear of sensibility start into his eyes on recalling some of the distressful scenes to which he had been witness, and the spirit of indignation flash from them on relating instances of baseness and oppression. Still, however, his constancy of mind and self-collection never deserted him.

him. He was never agitated, never off his guard; and the unspeakable advantages of such a temper in the scenes in which he was engaged, need not be dwelt upon.

His whole course of action was such a trial of intrepidity and fortitude, that it may seem altogether superfluous to speak of his possession of these qualities. He had them, indeed, both from nature and principle. His nerves were firm; and his conviction of marching in the path of duty made him fearless of consequences. Nor was it only on great occasions that this strength of mind was shown. It raised him above false shame, and that awe which makes a coward of many a brave man in the presence of a superior. No one ever less "feared the face

of man," than he. No one hesitated less in speaking bold truths, or avowing obnoxious opinions. His courage was equally passive and active. He was prepared to make every sacrifice that a regard to strict veracity, or rigorous duty, could enjoin; and it cannot be doubted, that, had he lived in an age when asserting his civil and religious rights would have subjected him to martyrdom, not a more willing martyr would ever have ascended the scaffold, or embraced the stake.

The resolute temper of Mr. *Howard* displayed itself in a certain peremptoriness, which, when he had once determined, rendered him unyielding to persuasion or dissuasion, and urged him on to the accomplishment of his purpose, regardless of obstacles. He expected prompt obedience

obedience in those from whom he had a right to require it, and was not a man to be treated with negligence and inattention. He was, however, extremely considerate, and sufficiently indulgent to human frailties; and a good-will to please him could scarcely fail of its effect. That his commands were reasonable, and his expectations moderate, may be inferred from the long continuance of most of his servants with him, and his steady attachment to many of those whom he employed. His means of enforcing compliance were chiefly rewards; and the withholding them was his method of showing displeasure\*.

The

\* The following characteristic anecdote was communicated to me by a gentleman who travelled in a  
chariot

The spirit of independence by which he was ever distinguished, had in him the only foundation to be relied on, *moderate desires.*

chaise with him from Lancashire to London in 1777. Mr. *Howard* observed, that he had found few things more difficult to manage than post-chaise drivers, who would seldom comply with his wishes of going slow or fast, till he adopted the following method. At the end of a stage, when the driver had been perverse, he desired the landlord to send for some poor industrious widow, or other proper object of charity, and to introduce such person and the driver together. He then paid the latter his fare, and told him, that as he had not thought proper to attend to his repeated requests as to the manner of being driven, he should not make him any present; but, to show him that he did not withhold it out of a principle of parsimony, he would give the poor person present double the sum usually given to a postillion. This he did, and dismissed the parties. He had not long practised this mode, he said, before he experienced the good effects of it on all the roads where he was known.

A more extraordinary instance of his determined spirit

*desires.* Perfectly contented with the competence which Providence had bestowed on him, he never had a thought of increasing it; and, even when in a situation to expect a family, he made it a

spirit has been related to me. Travelling once in the king of Prussia's dominions, he came to a very narrow piece of road, admitting only one carriage, where it was enjoined on all postillions entering at each end, to blow their horns by way of notice. His did so; but, after proceeding a good way, they met a courier travelling on the king's business, who had neglected this precaution. The courier ordered Mr. *Howard*'s postillion to turn back; but Mr. *Howard* remonstrated, that he had complied with the rule, while the other had violated it; and therefore that he should insist on going forwards. The courier, relying on an authority, to which, in that country, every thing must give way, made use of high words, but in vain. As neither was disposed to yield, they sat still a long time in their respective carriages: at length the courier gave up the point to the sturdy Englishman, who would on no account *renounce his rights.*

rule

rule with himself to lay up no part of his annual income, but to expend in some useful or benevolent scheme the superfluity of the year. Lest this should be converted into a charge of carelessness in providing for his own, it may be proper to mention, that he had the best-grounded expectations, that any children he might have, would largely partake of the wealth of their relations. Thus he preserved his heart from that contamination, which (taking in the whole of life) is perhaps the disease most frequently attendant on a state of prosperity, —*the lust of growing rich*; a passion, which is too often found to swallow up liberality, public spirit, and, at last, that independency, which it is the best use of wealth to secure. By this temper of  
mind



mind he was elevated to an immeasurable distance above every thing mean and fordid; and in all his transactions he displayed a spirit of honour and generosity, that might become the “ blood of the *Howards*” when flowing in its noblest channels.

Had Mr. *Howard* been less provided with the goods of fortune, his independency would have found a resource in *the fewness of his wants*; and it was an inestimable advantage which he brought to his great work, an advantage perhaps more uncommon in this country than any of those already mentioned, that he possessed a command over all corporeal appetites and habitudes, not less perfect than that of any ancient philosopher, or modern ascetic. The strict regimen of

7

diet

diet which he had adopted early in life from motives of health, he afterwards persevered in through choice, and even extended its rigour, so as to reject all those indulgences which even the most temperate consider as necessary for the preservation of their strength and vigour. Animal foods, and fermented and spirituous drinks, he utterly discarded from his diet. Water and the plainest vegetables sufficed him. Milk, tea, butter, and fruit, were his luxuries ; and he was equally sparing in the quantity of food, and indifferent as to the stated times of taking it. Thus he found his wants supplied in almost every place where *man* existed, and was as well provided in the posadas of Spain and caravanferas of Turkey, as in the inns and hotels

of England and France. Water was one of his principal necessaries, for he was a very Mussulman in his ablutions; and if nicety or delicacy had place with him in any respect, it was in the perfect cleanliness of his whole person. He was equally tolerant of heat, cold, and all the vicissitudes of climate; and, what is more wonderful, not even sleep seemed necessary to him, at least at those returns and in those proportions in which mankind in general expect it. How well he was capable of enduring fatigue, the amazing journies he took by all modes of conveyance, without any intervals of what might be called repose (since his only baiting places were his proper scenes of action), abundantly testify. In short, no human body was probably ever more perfectly

the

the servant of the mind by which it was actuated; and all the efforts of the strongest constitution, not inured to habits of self-denial, and moral as well as corporeal exercise, would have been unequal to his exertions \*.

With

\* The following account of his mode of travelling, communicated to me by a gentleman in Dublin, who had much free conversation with him, and the substance of which I well recollect to have heard from himself, will, I doubt not, prove interesting. "When he travelled in England or Ireland, it was generally on horseback, and he rode about forty English miles a day. He was never at a loss for an inn. When in Ireland, or the Highlands of Scotland, he used to stop at one of the poor cabins that stick up a rag by way of sign, and get a little milk. When he came to the town he was to sleep at, he bespoke a supper, with wine and beer, like another traveller, but made his man attend him, and take it away, whilst he was preparing his bread and milk. He always paid the waiters, postillions, &c. liberally, because he would have no discontent or dispute,

With respect to the character of his understanding, that, too, was as happily adapted to the great business in which he engaged. He had not, in a high degree, that extensive comprehension, that faculty of generalizing, which is said to

dispute, nor suffer his spirits to be agitated for such a matter ; saying, that in a journey that might cost three or four hundred pounds, fifteen or twenty pounds addition was not worth thinking about. When he travelled on the continent, he usually went post in his own chaise, which was a German one that he bought for the purpose. He never stopped till he came to the town he meant to visit, but travelled all night, if necessary ; and from habit could sleep very well in the chaise for several nights together. In the last tour but one he travelled twenty days and nights together without going to bed, and found no inconvenience from it. He used to carry with him a small tea-kettle, some cups, a little pot of sweetmeats, and a few loaves. At the post-house he could get his water boiled, send out for milk, and make his repast, while his man went to the *auberge*."

Q

distinguish

distinguish the man of genius, but which, without a previous collection of authentic materials, is ever apt to lead into erroneous speculations. He was rather a man of detail; of laborious accuracy and minute examination; and therefore he had the proper qualities for one who was to lead the way in researches where all was ignorance, confusion, and local custom. Who but such a man could have collected a body of information, which has made even professional men acquainted with interesting facts that they never before knew; and has given the English reader a more exact knowledge of practices followed in Russia and Spain, than he before had of those in his own country? This minuteness of detail was what he ever regarded as his peculiar province.

As

As he was of all men the most modest estimator of his own abilities, he was used to say, "I am the *plodder*, who goes about to collect materials for men of genius to make use of." Let those who look with fastidiousness upon long tables of rules and orders, and measurements of cells and work-rooms, given in feet and inches, consider, that when a scheme is brought into practice, these small circumstances *must* have their place; and that the most ingenious plans often fail in their execution for want of adjustment in the nicer parts. Perhaps even the great Frederic of Prussia was more indebted for success to the exactness of his dispositions in every minute particular connected with practice, than to deep and sublime views of general principles.

From a similar cast of mind, Mr. *Howard* was a friend to subordination, and all the decorums of regular society; nor did he dislike vigorous exertions of civil authority, when directed to laudable purposes. He interfered little in disputes relative to the theory of government; but was contented to take systems of sovereignty as he found them established in various parts of the world, satisfied with prompting such an application of their powers as might promote the welfare of the respective communities. A state of imprisonment being that in which the rights of men are, in great part, at least, suspended, it was natural that his thoughts should be more conversant with a people as the subjects, than as the source, of authority. Yet  
 he



he well knew, and properly valued, the inestimable blessings of political freedom, as opposed to despotism; and, among the nations of Europe, he considered the Dutch and Swiss as affording the best examples of a strict and steady police, conducted upon principles of equity and humanity. To the character of the Dutch he was, indeed, peculiarly partial; and frequently asserted, that he should prefer Holland for his place of residence, to any other foreign country. I can add, from undoubted authority, that Mr. *Howard* was one of those who (in the language of the great Lord Chatham) “rejoiced that America had resisted,” and triumphed in her final success; that he was principally attached to the popular part of our constitution;

and that in his own county he distinguished himself by a spirited opposition to aristocratical influence.

His peculiar habits of life, and the exclusive attention he bestowed in his later years on a few objects, caused him to appear more averse to society than I think he really was; and it has been mentioned as an unfortunate circumstance, that his shyness and reserve frequently kept him out of the way of persons from whom he might have derived much useful information. But it is vain to desire things incompatible. Mr. *Howard* can scarcely be denied to have chosen the best way, upon the whole, of conducting his enquiries; and if he had been a more *companionable* man, more ready to indulge his own curiosity, and gratify

gratify that of others, he would no longer have possessed one of the chief advantages he brought to his great work. Yet while he assiduously shunned all engagements which would have involved him in the forms and dissipation of society, he was by no means disinclined to enter into conversations on his particular topics; on the contrary, he was often extremely communicative, and would enliven a small circle with the most entertaining relations of his travels and adventures.

Mr. *Howard* had in a high degree that respectful attention to the *female sex* which so much characterises the *gentleman*. Perhaps, indeed, I may here be referring to rules of politeness which no longer exist. But he was as thorough-

ly impressed with the maxim of *place aux dames* as any Frenchman, though without the strain of light and complimentary gallantry which has accompanied it in the individuals of that nation. His was a more serious sentiment, connected with the uniform practice of giving up his own ease and accommodation, for the sake of doing a real kindness to any female of decent character. It is excellently illustrated by an anecdote related in a magazine, by a person who chanced to sail with him in the packet from Holyhead to Dublin, when, the vessel being much crowded, Mr. *Howard* resigned his bed to a servant-maid, and took up with the cabin floor for himself. It is likewise displayed throughout his works, by the warmth with

which

which he always censures the practice of putting female prisoners in irons, and exposing them to any harsh and indelicate treatment. He was fond of nothing so much as the conversation of women of education and cultivated manners, and studied to attach them by little elegant presents, and other marks of attention. Indeed, his soft tones of voice and gentleness of demeanour might be thought to approach somewhat to the effeminate, and would surprise those who had known him only by the energy of his exertions. In his judgment of female character, it was manifest that the idea of his lost Harriet was the standard of excellence; and, if ever he had married again, a resemblance to her would have been the principal motive of his choice. I recollect

lect to this purpose a singular anecdote, which he related to us on his return from one of his tours. In going from one town in Holland to another in the common passage boat, he was placed near an elderly gentleman, who had in company a young lady of a most engaging manner and appearance, which very strongly reminded him of his Harriet. He was so much struck with her, that, on arriving at the place of destination, he caused his servant to follow them, and get intelligence who they were. It was not without some disappointment that he learned, that the old gentleman was an eminent merchant, and the young lady,—*his wife*.

Mr. Howard's predilection for female society, was in part a consequence of his

his abhorrence of every thing gross and licentious. His own language and manners were invariably pure and delicate; and the freedoms which pass uncensured or even applauded in the promiscuous companies of men, would have affected him with sensations of disgust. For a person possessed of such feelings, to have brought himself to submit to such frequent communication with the most abandoned of mankind, was perhaps a greater triumph of duty over inclination than any other he obtained in the prosecution of his designs. Yet the nature of his errand to prisons probably inspired awe and respect in the most dissolute; and I think he has recorded, that he never met with a single insult from the

the prisoners in any of the gaols, he visited.

As Mr. *Howard* was so eminently a *religious* character, it may be expected that somewhat more should be said of the peculiar tenets he adopted. But, besides that, this was a topic which did not enter into our conversations, I confess, I do not perceive how his general plan of conduct was likely to be influenced by any *peculiarity* of that kind. The principle of *religious duty*, which is nearly the same in all systems, and differs rather in strength than in kind in different persons, is surely sufficient to account for all that he did and underwent in promoting the good of mankind, by modes which Providence seemed to place



place before him. It has been suggested, that he was much under the influence of the doctrine of *predestination*; and I know not what of *sternness* has been attributed to him as its natural consequence. For my own part, I am not able to discover in what those notions of Providence, general and particular, which make part of the profession of all religions, differ essentially from the opinions of the predestinarians; and, from manifold observation, I am certain, that the reception of the doctrine of predestination, as an article of belief, does not necessarily imply those practical consequences which might seem deducible from it. The language, at least, of our lower classes of people is almost universally founded upon it; but when one of them dies  
of

of an infectious disease, notwithstanding the bystanders all speak of the event as fated and inevitable, yet each, for himself, does not the less avoid the infection, or the less recur to medical aid if attacked by it. With respect to Mr. *Howard*, he never seemed to adopt the idea that he was moved by an irresistible impulse to his designs; for they were the subject of much thought and discussion: nor did he confront dangers because he had a persuasion that he should be preserved from their natural consequences, but because he was elevated above them. This sentiment he has himself more than once expressed in print; and surely none could be either more rational, or more adequate to the effects produced. “Being in the way of my duty (says he),

I fear no evil." I may venture to affirm, that those of the medical profession, whose fearlessness is not merely the result of habit, must reason upon the same principle, when they calmly expose themselves to similar hazards. *They*, for the most part, use no precautions against contagion: Mr. *Howard* did use some; though their effects were probably trifling compared with that of his habitual temperance and cleanliness, and his untroubled serenity of mind. On the whole, his religious confidence does not appear to have been of a nature different from that of other pious men; but to be so steadily and uniformly under its influence, and to be elevated by it to such a superiority to all worldly considerations, can be the lot of none but those who have

have formed early habits of referring every thing to the divine will, and of fixing all their views on futurity.

From Mr. *Howard's* connections with those sects who have ever shewn a particular abhorrence of the frauds and superstitions of popery, it might be supposed, that he would look with a prejudiced eye on the professors and ministers of that persuasion. But such was his veneration for true vital religion, that he was as ready to pay it honour when he met with it in the habit of a *monk*, as under the garb of a *teacher*: and throughout his works, as well as in conversation, he ever dwelt with great complacency on the pure zeal for the good of mankind, and genuine Christian charity, which he frequently discovered

among

among the Roman Catholic clergy, both regular and fecular. He was no friend to that hasty diffolution of convents and monafteries which formed part of the multifarious reforms of the late Emperor of Germany. He pitied the aged inmates, male and female, of thefe quiet abodes, who were driven from their beloved retreats into the wide world, with a very flender and often ill-paid pittance for their fupport. “ Why might not they (he would fay) be fuffered gradually to die away, and be tranfplanted from one religious houfe to another as their numbers leffened ? ” Thofe orders which make it the great duty of their profeflion to attend with the kindeft af-  
fidity upon the fick and imprifoned, and who therefore came continually with-

in his notice, seemed to conciliate his good-will to the whole fraternity ; and the virtues of order, decency, sobriety, and charity, so much akin to his own, naturally inclined him to a kind of fellowship with them. He rigorously, however, abstained from any compliances with their worship which he thought unlawful ; and gave them his esteem as men, without the least disposition to concur with them as theologians.

Such were the great lines of Mr. *Howard's* character—lines strongly marked, and sufficient to discriminate him from any of those who have appeared in a part somewhat similar to his own on the theatre of the world. The union of qualities which so peculiarly fitted him for the post he undertook, is not likely,

in our age, again to take place; yet different combinations may be employed to effect the same purposes; and, with respect to the objects of police and humanity concerning which he occupied himself, the information he has collected will render the repetition of labours like his unnecessary. To propose as a model, a character marked with such singularities, and, no doubt, with some foibles, would be equally vain and injudicious; but his firm attachment to principle, high sense of honour, pure benevolence, unshaken constancy, and indefatigable perseverance, may properly be held up to the view of all persons occupying important stations, or engaged in useful enterprises, as qualities not less to be imitated, than admired.

I shall conclude with some account of the *literary honours* which Mr. *Howard* has received from his countrymen. It would, indeed, have been extraordinary, if, while senates and courts of judicature offered him their tribute of applause, poetry and eloquence should have shewn an insensibility to his merits. Besides the acknowledgments paid him in every publication upon topics similar to his own, he became the theme of the elegant muse of Mr. *Hayley*, who addressed to him an ode in the year 1780, to which reference has already been made. In the succeeding year, Mr. *Burke*, adverting, in a speech to the freemen of Bristol, to a fact in Mr. *Howard*'s book, struck out, with the enthusiasm of genius, into a panegyrical digression on his plans and actions,



actions, decorated with his peculiar strain of glowing imagery. This speech was afterwards printed, and the passage concerning Mr. *Howard* was copied into various periodical writings, and read with universal approbation. His character was even exhibited on the stage; for a comedy of Mrs. *Inchbald's*, entitled *Such Things Are*, contained a part evidently modelled upon his peculiar cast of benevolence, which for a time rendered the piece popular.

Dr. *Darwin's* very beautiful poem of *the Botanic Garden*, printed in 1789, amidst an unexpected variety of subjects, presents an eulogium of Mr. *Howard*, so appropriate and poetical, that I am sure no reader of taste will require an apology from me for inserting it.

—And

—And now, BENEVOLENCE! thy rays divine  
 Dart round the globe from Zembla to the Line;  
 O'er each dark prison plays the cheering light,  
 Like northern lustres o'er the vault of night.—  
 From realm to realm, with cross or crescent crown'd,  
 Where'er mankind and misery are found,  
 O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,  
 Thy HOWARD journeying seeks the house of woe.  
 Down many a winding step to dungeons dank,  
 Where anguish wails aloud, and fetters clank;  
 To caves bestrew'd with many a mouldering bone,  
 And cells, whose echoes only learn to groan;  
 Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,  
 No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows,  
 He treads, inemulous of fame or wealth,  
 Profuse of toil, and prodigal of health;  
 With soft assuasive eloquence expands  
 Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands;  
 Leads stern-eye'd justice to the dark domains,  
 If not to sever, to relax the chains;  
 Or guides awaken'd mercy through the gloom,  
 And shews the prison, sister to the tomb!—  
 Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,  
 To her fond husband liberty and life!—  
 —The spirits of the good, who bend from high  
 Wide o'er these earthly scenes their partial eye,  
 When first, array'd in VIRTUE's purest robe,  
 They saw her HOWARD traversing the globe;

Saw

Saw round his brows her sun-like glory blaze,  
 In arrowy circles of unwearied rays;  
 Mistook a mortal for an angel-guest,  
 And ask'd what seraph-foot the earth imprest.  
 —Onward he moves!—Disease and death retire,  
 And murmuring demons hate him, and admire.

After these lines, I cannot be prompted by vanity in transcribing some greatly inferior ones, which, too, have already been offered to the public. But, as they were written under the influence of heartfelt emotions, and refer to the leading principle of his actions, I hope they will not be thought misplaced as the close of a volume, the purpose of which is to represent his character in strong and faithful colours.

## ON THE DEATH OF MR. HOWARD.

HOWARD, thy task is done ! thy Master calls,  
 And summons thee from Cherfon's distant walls.  
 " Come, well-approv'd ! my faithful servant ! come ;  
 " No more a wand'rer, seek thy destin'd home.  
 " Long have I mark'd thee with o'er-ruling eye,  
 " And sent admiring angels from on high,  
 " To walk the paths of danger by thy side,  
 " From death to shield thee, and thro' snares to guide.  
 " My *minister of good*, I've sped thy way,  
 " And shot thro' dungeon glooms a leading ray,  
 " To cheer, by thee, with kind unhop'd relief,  
 " My creatures lost and whelm'd in guilt and grief.  
 " I've led thee, ardent, on thro' wond'ring climes,  
 " To combat human woes and human crimes.  
 " But 'tis enough !—thy *great commission's* o'er ;  
 " I prove thy faith, thy love, thy zeal, no more.  
 " Nor droop, that far from country, kindred, friends,  
 " Thy life, to duty long devoted, ends ;  
 " What boots it *where* the high reward is giv'n,  
 " Or *whence* the soul triumphant springs to heav'n ?"

F I N I S.

## ERRATUM.

Page 92, l. 13, for *where* read *when*.

I  
Aikin, John and  
" Carbauld, A. L.

# MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

I N P R O S E,

By J. and A. L. AIKIN.

SI NON UNIUS, QUÆSO MISERERE DUORUM.

PROPERT.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

MDCCCLXXIII.



# CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>ON the Province of Comedy</i> -	1.
<i>The Hill of Science, a Vision</i> -	27.
<i>On Romances, an Imitation</i> -	39.
<i>Seláma, an Imitation of Ossian</i>	47.
<i>Against Inconsistency in our Ex- pectations</i> - -	59.
<i>The Canal and the Brook, a Reverie</i>	79.
<i>On Monastic Institutions</i> - -	88.
<i>On the Pleasure derived from Ob- jects of Terror ; with Sir Ber- trand, a Fragment</i> - -	117.
<i>On the Heroic Poem of Gondibert</i>	138.
<i>An Enquiry into those Kinds of Distress which excite agreeable Sensations ; with a Tale</i> -	190.

## ERRATA.

Page 15. l. ult. before *nature* read *in*.

Page 97. l. 3. after *Malmsbury* for a comma put a full stop;  
and after *Sawanarola* for a full stop put a semicolon.

Page 122. l. 1. for *introduce* read *introduced*.

Page 130. l. 17. for *fall* read *fell*.

Page 135. l. 1. for *habits* read *habit*.

Page 139. l. 11. for *inconsistency* read *inconstancy*.

Page 141. l. 8. for *methods* read *method*.

Page 153. l. 11. for *lead* read *led*.

Page 168. l. 8. for *drawn* read *draw*.



ON THE  
P R O V I N C E  
O F  
C O M E D Y.

**V**ARIOUS are the methods which art and ingenuity have invented to exhibit a picture of human life and manners. These have differed from each other both in the mode of representation, and in the particular view of the subject which has been taken.

B

With

With respect to the first, it is universally allowed that the dramatic form is by far the most perfect. The circumstance of leaving every character to display itself in its own proper language, with all the variations of tone and gesture which distinguish it from others, and which mark every emotion of the mind; and the scenic delusions of dress, painting, and machinery, contribute to stamp such an appearance of reality upon dramatic representations as no other of the imitative arts can attain. Indeed, when in their perfection, they can scarcely be called imitations, but the very things themselves; and real nature would perhaps appear less perfect than her counterfeit.

THE Drama has from early antiquity been distinguished into the two grand divisions of Tragedy and Comedy. It would seem that the general character of these

these was universally understood and agreed on, by the adoption of the terms *tragic* and *comic*, derived from them, into the language of every civilized people. The former of these is, we know, constantly applied to objects of terror and distress; the latter, to those of mirth and pleasantry. There is, however, a more comprehensive distinction of our feelings, which it is proper first to consider.

WHEN we examine the emotions produced in our minds by the view of human actions, we shall observe a division into the *serious*, and the *ludicrous*. I do not think it necessary to define or analyse feelings with which all are well acquainted. It is enough to observe that serious emotions are produced by the display of all the great passions which agitate the soul, and by all those actions which are under the jurisdiction of the grand rules of reli-

gion and morality; and that ludicrous emotions are excited by the improprieties and inconsistencies of conduct or judgment in smaller matters; such as the effects of false taste, or trifling passions. When we now apply the words *tragic* and *comic*, we shall at once perceive that the former can relate solely to such subjects as occasion *serious*, and the latter to such as occasion *ludicrous* emotions.

Now, although the practice of writers has frequently introduced ludicrous parts into the composition called a Tragedy, and serious parts into that called a Comedy, yet it has ever been understood that what constitutes the essential and invariable character of each is something which is expressed by the terms *tragic* and *comic*, and comes under the head of *serious* or *ludicrous* emotions. Referring therefore to a future consideration, the propriety  
of

of introducing serious parts in a Comedy, I shall now lay down the character of Comedy as *a dramatic composition exhibiting a ludicrous picture of human life and manners.*

THERE are two sources of ludicrous emotions which it is proper here to distinguish. One of these arises from *character*, the other from *incident*. The first is attached and appropriated to the person, and makes a part, as it were, of his composition. The other is merely accidental, proceeding from awkward situations, odd and uncommon circumstances, and the like, which may happen indifferently to every person. If we compare these with regard to their dignity and utility, we shall find a further difference; since that proceeding from *character* belongs to a very respectable part of knowledge, that of human manners; and has for its end the correction of foibles: whereas that pro-

## 6 ON THE PROVINCE

ceeding from *incident* is mean and trivial in its origin, and answers no other purpose than present mirth. 'Tis true, it is perfectly natural to be pleased with risible objects even of the lowest kind, and a fastidious aversion to their exhibition may be accounted mere affected nicety; yet since we rank Comedy among the higher and more refined species of composition, let us assign it the more honourable office of exhibiting and correcting the ludicrous part of *characters*; and leave to Bartholemew Fair the ingenious contrivances of facetious drollery, and handicraft merri-ment.

THE following sources may be pointed out from whence comic character is derived.

NATIONS, like individuals, have certain leading features which distinguish them

them from others. Of these there are always some of a ludicrous cast which afford matter of entertainment to their neighbours. Comedy has at all times made very free with national peculiarities; and although the ridicule has often been conducted in a trivial and illiberal manner, by greatly overcharging the picture, and introducing idle and unjust accusations, yet I think we need not go so far as entirely to reject this sort of ludicrous painting; since it may be as important to warn against the imitation of foreign follies, as those of our own growth. Indeed, when a Frenchman or Irishman is brought upon our stage merely to talk broken English, or make bulls, there can be no plea either of wit or utility to excuse the illiberal jest: but when the nicer distinctions of national character are exposed with a just and delicate ridicule, the spectacle may be both entertaining and instructive.

## 8 ON THE PROVINCE

Amidst the tribe of foreign valets to be met with on the English theatre, I would instance CANTON in the *Clandestine Marriage* as an admirable example of true national character, independent on language and grimace. The obsequiousness and attentive flattery of the fervile Swiss-Frenchman are quite characteristic, as well as the careless insolence and affected airs of Brush the English footman.\*

O'FLAHERTY,

\* I AM concerned to observe an instance of illiberal national ridicule without any merit of composition to palliate it, from a respectable dramatic writer; which is also rendered much more obnoxious by the circumstances. Mr. Voltaire's *Ecoffaise* was purposely written to exhibit a worthy English character; marked, indeed, with some whimsical peculiarities, but distinguished by a strong spirit of benevolence. It was impossible to expose national foibles more gently than by combining them with national virtues. When this piece was brought on our stage under the title of the *English Merchant*, a French valet was inserted among the *personæ dramatis*, characterised by nothing but his false English, and for no other end but to be exhibited as a scoundrel!



O'FLAHERTY, the Irish soldier of fortune in the *West Indian*, is an example of similar merit; much more so, I think, than the character from which the piece has its title.

ALTHOUGH some part of the character of a nation is pretty uniform and constant, yet its manners and customs in many points are extremely variable. These variations are the peculiar modes and fashions of the age; and hence the age, as well as the nation, acquires a distinguishing character. Fashion, in general, usurps a dominion only over the smaller and less important part of manners; such as dress, public diversions, and other matters of taste. The improprieties of fashion are therefore of the absurd and ludicrous kind, and consequently fit subjects of comic ridicule. There is no source of Comedy more fertile and pleasing than this;  
and

and none in which the end of reformation is likely to be so well answered. An extravagant fashion is exhibited upon the stage with such advantage of ridicule that it can scarcely stand long against it; and I make no doubt that Moliere's *Marquis de Mascarille*, and Cibber's *Lord Foppington* had a considerable share in reforming the prevailing foppery of the times. Fashion has also too much interfered in some more serious matters, as the sentiments and studies of the age. Here too Comedy has made its attacks; and the Alchemist, the Virtuoso, the Antiquary, the Belle Esprit, have in their turns undergone the ridicule of the stage, when their respective pursuits, by being fashionable, were carried to a fanciful extravagance. It is well known that Moliere, in his comedies of the *Femmes Scavantes*, and the *Precieuses Ridicules*, was as successful against the pedantry and pretensions to wit which infected

fects the French nation, and particularly the ladies, at that period, as Cervantes in his attack upon knight-errantry.

THERE is another point of national or fashionable folly in which Comedy might be very useful; yet the attempt has been found dangerous; and perhaps the subject is too delicate for the stage, considering the abuses to which it is liable. I mean popular superstition, and priestcraft. Moliere, who with impunity had attacked every other species of folly, was almost ruined by exposing a hypocrite and a devotee; and the licentious ridicule of Dryden, and others of that age, was generally aimed not only against superstition, but religion. The *Spanish Friar*, however, is an instance in which, with exquisite humour, the ridicule can hardly be blamed as improper; and it certainly did more hurt to Roman catholic superstition than he

he could ever remedy by his scholastic *Hind and Panther*. How far the *Minor* comes under the same description would, probably, be a subject of dispute.

PARTICULAR ranks and professions of men have likewise characteristical peculiarities which are capable of being placed in a ludicrous view; and Comedy has made frequent use of this source of ridicule. In exposing professional, as well as national absurdities, great illiberality and unfairness have been shown; both, probably, from the same cause; a want of sufficient acquaintance with the whole characters, and taking a judgment of them from a few external circumstances. Yet, upon the whole, good effects may have arisen even from this branch of Comedy; since by attacking a profession on a side where it was really weak, the members of it have been made sensible of, and  
have

have reformed those circumstances which rendered them ridiculous. A good-natured physician can never be angry at Moliere's most laughable exhibitions of the faculty, when he reflects that the follies ridiculed, though exaggerated in the representation, had a real existence; and by being held up to public derision have been in a great measure reformed. The professors of law, being necessarily confined to forms and rules, have not been able to benefit so much from the comic ridicule of which they have enjoyed an equally plentiful share.

BESIDES the arrangements which nation and profession make of mankind, there are certain natural classes formed from the diversities of personal character. Although the varieties of temper and disposition in men are infinite, so that no two persons probably ever existed in whom  
there

there was an exact conformity, yet there are certain leading features of character which produce a general resemblance among numerous individuals. Thus the proud man, the vain, the sanguine, the splenetic, the suspicious, the covetous, the lavish, and so forth, are a sort of abstract characters which divide the whole human race amongst them. Now there are, belonging to all these, objects of ridicule which it has been the business of Comedy to exhibit; and though, perhaps, no one individual of each class perfectly resembled the person held to view on the stage, yet if all the circumstances exhibited are contained in the general character, it appears sufficiently natural. The *Miser* of Moliere is not a picture of any one miser who ever lived, but of a miser considered as forming a class of human characters. As these general classes, however, are few in number, they must be soon exhausted  
by

by the writers of Comedy; who have been obliged, for the sake of variety, to exhibit those peculiarities which are more rare and singular. Hence have been derived many pictures of that character which we call an *humourist*; by which is meant a character distinguished by certain ludicrous singularities from the rest of mankind. The humourist is not without those marks of distinction which he may acquire, like others, from rank, profession, or temper of mind; but all these are displayed in him after a manner peculiarly his own, and dashed with his leading oddities. A love of what is uncommon and out of the way has often occasioned such extravagance in the representation of these characters as to disgust from their want of probability; but where a due moderation is observed, and the peculiarities, though unusual, are such as really exist in nature, great entertainment may be derived

## 16 ON THE PROVINCE

rived from their exhibition. Of this kind are the admirable *Misanthrope* and *Malade Imaginaire* of Moliere ; and the *Old Bachelor* and *Sir Sampson Legend* of Congreve.

FROM hence it appears but a small gradation to the exhibition of individuals upon the stage ; and yet the difference is important and essential. That which marks out the distinction between individuals of the same species is something entirely uncommunicable ; therefore the rational end of Comedy, which is the reformation of folly, cannot take place in personal ridicule ; for it will not be allowed that reforming the person himself is the object. Nor can it scarcely ever be just to expose an individual to the ridicule of the stage ; since folly, and not vice, being the proper subject of that ridicule, it is hardly possible any one can  
deserve



deserve so severe a punishment. Indeed the exposing of folly can scarcely be the plea; for all the common, or even the rarer kinds of folly lie open to the attack of Comedy under fictitious characters, by means of which the failing may be ridiculed without the person. Personal ridicule must therefore turn, as we find it always has done, upon bodily imperfections, awkward habits and uncouth gestures; which the low arts of mimicry inhumanly drag forth to public view for the mean purpose of exciting present merriment. In the best hands, personal Comedy would be a degradation of the stage, and an unwarrantable severity; but in the hands it would be likely, if encouraged, to fall into, it would prove an intolerable nuisance. I should therefore, without hesitation, join those who utterly condemn this species of comic ridicule. It is also to be considered that the author shows his

talents to disadvantage, and cannot lay any basis of future fame, in this walk. For the resemblance which depends so much upon mimicry is lost upon those of the audience who are not acquainted with the original, and upon every one who only reads the piece. Mr. Foote's works will aptly exemplify this matter; in which, the fund of genuine Comedy, derived from happy strokes upon the manners of the times, and uncommon, but not entirely singular characters, will secure a lasting admiration, when the mimicry which supported the parts of *Squintum* and *Cadwallader* is despised or forgotten.

HAVING thus attempted to trace the different sources of what I conceive the essential part of true Comedy, *the ridicule derived from character*, it remains to say somewhat of the mixture of additional matter

matter which it has received as a composition.

DURING a considerable period of modern literature, *wit* was a commodity in great request, and frequently to be met with in all kinds of composition. It was nowhere more abundant than in Comedy, the genius of which it appeared peculiarly to suit from its gaiety and satyrical smartness. Accordingly, the language of Comedy was a string of repartees, in which a thought was bandied about from one to another, till it was quite run out of breath. This made a scene pass off with great vivacity; but the misfortune was, that distinction of character was quite lost in the contest. Every personage, from the lord to the valet, was as witty as the author himself; and provided good things enow were said, it was no matter from whom they came. Congreve, with the

greatest talents for true comic humour, and the delineation of ludicrous character, was so over-run with a fondness for brilliancy, as frequently to break in upon consistency. Wit is an admirable ornament of Comedy, and judiciously applied is a high relief to humour; but should never interfere with the more essential parts.

WE are now, however, happily free from all manner of danger of an inundation of wit. No Congreve arises to disturb the sententious gravity, and calm simplicity of modern Comedy. A moralist may congratulate the age on hearing from the theatre compositions as pure, serious and delicate, as are given from the pulpit. When we consider how much wit and humour, at the time they were most prevalent, were perverted to vicious purposes, we may rejoice at the sacrifice; yet

yet we may be allowed to feel a regret at the loss of an amusement which might, certainly, have been reconciled with innocence; nay might perhaps have pleaded utility beyond what is substituted in its room. *Sentimental Comedy*, as it is called, contains but very faint discrimination of character, and scarcely any thing of ridicule. Its principal aim is to introduce elegant and refined sentiment, particularly of the benevolent cast; and to move the heart by tender and interesting situations. Hence they are, in general, much more affecting than our modern Tragedies, which are formed upon nearly the same plan, but labour under the disadvantage of a formal, stately stile, and manners removed too far from the rank of common life. One would not, perhaps, wish altogether to banish from the stage pieces so moral and innocent; yet it is a pity they are not distinguished by

some appropriated name from a thing they so little resemble as true Comedy.

I FEAR, a view of modern manners in other respects will scarcely allow us to flatter ourselves that this change in the theatre chiefly proceeds from improved morality. It may, perhaps, be more justly attributed to a false delicacy of taste, which renders us unable to bear the representation of low life; and to a real deficiency in genius. With respect to the first, genuine Comedy knows no distinction of rank, but can as heartily enjoy a humorous picture in the common walks of life, where indeed the greatest variety is to be found, as in the most cultivated and refined. Some have placed the distinction between Farce and Comedy in the rank from whence the characters are taken; but, I think, very improperly. If there is any real distinction besides the length

length of the pieces, I should take it from the different source of the humour; which in Farce is mere ludicrous incident, but in Comedy, ridiculous character. This criterion, however, will not at all agree with the titles under which each species has already appeared.

As to the other cause, deficiency of genius, it too plainly appears in many other productions. Cold correctness has laid her repressing hand upon imagination, and damped all her powers. The example of the ancients has been thought to justify the gravity and simplicity of modern Comedy. But great as they were in many qualities of the mind, in those of wit and humour they were still more defective than even ourselves in the present age. They, who would eagerly catch at a wretched pun, or a meagre piece of plot, were certainly with-held from witti-

cism and drollery by want of invention, not justness of taste. I admire in the pure Latin of Terence the elegant sentiment, and still more the knowledge of the human heart with which he abounds; but I would not for them compare his genius, at least in Comedy, with Moliere and Congreve.

Lenibus atque utinam scriptis adjuncta foret vis  
Comica —————

Moral sentiment is the cheapest product of the mind. Novels, and magazines, and even news-papers are full of it; but wit and humour threaten to leave us with Sterne and Chesterfield.

STILL, however, I would hope the state of Comedy is not desperate. The *Clandestine Marriage* exhibits an example of comic merit, as various and perfect as perhaps any piece in our language. All  
the



the sources of ludicrous character have contributed to it. National ridicule appears in Canton, and professional in Sterling. Lord Ogleby is an excellent humourist. Mrs. Heidleberg and her niece, besides a comic pettishness of temper, have plenty of fashionable follies, modified by city vulgarism. Even the lovers of tender sentiment have their share in the entertainment; and I by no means would object to its occasional introduction, when, as it were, offering itself from the circumstances. Then, besides Mr. Foote's comic theatre, we have several pieces, which, though ranged under the list of Farces, contain true and original Comedy. Of these we may instance the *Citizen*, *Polly Honeycomb*, *the Upholsterer*, *the Apprentice*, and *the Oxonian in Town*. It is a mistake to suppose that the matter of Comedy can ever fail. Though general characters may be exhausted, yet the prevailing follies and fashions of the times,

times, with the singularities starting up in particular ranks and orders of men, must constantly supply food for the ridicule of the stage. This is lawful game; and the pursuit of it is well worthy the encouragement of the public, so long as it is unattended with the licentiousness which disgraced the wit of the last age. Let ridicule be sacred to the interests of good sense and virtue; let it never make a good character less respectable, nor a bad one less obnoxious. But let us not resign its use to common-place maxim, and insipid sentiment.

THE

T H E

HILL OF SCIENCE,

A VISION.

**I**N that season of the year when the serenity of the sky, the various fruits which cover the ground, the discoloured foliage of the trees, and all the sweet, but fading graces of inspiring autumn, open the mind to benevolence, and dispose it for contemplation ; I was wandering in a beautiful and romantic country,  
till

## 28 THE HILL OF SCIENCE,

till curiosity began to give way to weariness; and I sat me down on the fragment of a rock overgrown with moss, where the rustling of the falling leaves, the dashing of waters, and the hum of the distant city, soothed my mind into the most perfect tranquility, and sleep insensibly stole upon me, as I was indulging the agreeable reveries which the objects around me naturally inspired.

I IMMEDIATELY found myself in a vast extended plain, in the middle of which arose a mountain higher than I had before any conception of. It was covered with a multitude of people, chiefly youth; many of whom pressed forwards with the liveliest expression of ardor in their countenance, though the way was in many places steep and difficult. I observed, that those who had but just begun to climb the hill, thought themselves not far from the top; but as they proceeded,

new

new hills were continually rising to their view, and the summit of the highest they could before discern, seemed but the foot of another, till the mountain at length appeared to lose itself in the clouds. As I was gazing on these things with astonishment, my good genius suddenly appeared. The mountain before thee, said he, is the HILL OF SCIENCE. On the top is the temple of Truth, whose head is above the clouds, and a veil of pure light covers her face. Observe the progress of her votaries; be silent, and attentive.

I saw that the only regular approach to the mountain was by a gate, called the gate of languages. It was kept by a woman of a pensive and thoughtful appearance, whose lips were continually moving, as though she repeated something to herself. Her name was MEMORY. On entering this first enclosure, I was stunned with a confused murmur of jarring voices,  
and

## 30 THE HILL OF SCIENCE,

and dissonant sounds; which increased upon me to such a degree, that I was utterly confounded, and could compare the noise to nothing but the confusion of tongues at Babel. The road was also rough and stony; and rendered more difficult by heaps of rubbish, continually tumbled down from the higher parts of the mountain; and broken ruins of ancient buildings, which the travellers were obliged to climb over at every step; inso-much that many, disgusted with so rough a beginning, turned back and attempted the mountain no more: while others, having conquered this difficulty, had no spirits to ascend further; and sitting down on some fragment of the rubbish, harangued the multitude below with the greatest marks of importance and self-complacency.

ABOUT half way up the hill, I observed on each side the path a thick forest

forest covered with continual fogs, and cut out into labyrinths, cross alleys, and serpentine walks, entangled with thorns and briars. This was called the *wood of error*: and I heard the voices of many who were lost up and down in it, calling to one another, and endeavouring in vain to extricate themselves. The trees in many places shot their boughs over the path, and a thick mist often rested on it; yet never so much but that it was discernable by the light which beamed from the countenance of truth.

IN the pleasantest part of the mountain were placed the bowers of the Muses, whose office it was to cheer the spirits of the travellers, and encourage their fainting steps with songs from their divine harps. Not far from hence were the *fields of fiction*, filled with a variety of wild flowers springing up in the greatest luxuriance, of richer scents and brighter colours

## 32 THE HILL OF SCIENCE,

colours than I had observed in any other climate. And near them was the *dark walk of allegory*, so artificially shaded, that the light at noon-day was never stronger than that of a bright moon-shine. This gave it a pleasingly romantic air for those who delighted in contemplation. The paths and alleys were perplexed with intricate windings, and were all terminated with the statue of a Grace, a Virtue, or a Muse.

AFTER I had observed these things, I turned my eye towards the multitudes who were climbing the steep ascent, and observed amongst them a youth of a lively look, a piercing eye, and something fiery and irregular in all his motions. His name was GENIUS. He darted like an eagle up the mountain, and left his companions gazing after him with envy and admiration : but his progress was unequal,  
and



and interrupted by a thousand caprices. When Pleasure warbled in the valley he mingled in her train. When Pride beckoned towards the precipice he ventured to the tottering edge. He delighted in devious and untried paths; and made so many excursions from the road that his feeblers companions often outstripped him. I observed that the Muses beheld him with partiality; but Truth often frowned and turned aside her face. While Genius was thus wasting his strength in excentric flights, I saw a person of a very different appearance named APPLICATION. He crept along with a slow and unremitting pace, his eyes fixed on the top of the mountain, patiently removing every stone that obstructed his way, till he saw most of those below him who had at first derided his slow and toilsome progress. Indeed there were few who ascended the hill with equal and uninterrupted steadiness; for beside

D

the

## 34 THE HILL OF SCIENCE,

the difficulties of the way, they were continually solicited to turn aside by a numerous crowd of Appetites, Passions, and Pleasures, whose importunity, when they had once complied with, they became less and less able to resist; and though they often returned to the path, the asperities of the road were more severely felt, the hill appeared more steep and rugged, the fruits which were wholesome and refreshing seemed harsh and ill-tasted, their sight grew dim, and their feet tript at every little obstruction.

I SAW, with some surprise, that the Muses, whose business was to cheer and encourage those who were toiling up the ascent, would often sing in the bowers of Pleasure, and accompany those who were enticed away at the call of the Passions. They accompanied them, however, but a little way, and always forsook them  
when

when they lost sight of the hill. The tyrants then doubled their chains upon the unhappy captives, and led them away without resistance to the cells of Ignorance, or the mansions of Misery. Amongst the innumerable seducers, who were endeavouring to draw away the votaries of Truth from the path of Science, there was one, so little formidable in her appearance, and so gentle and languid in her attempts, that I should scarcely have taken notice of her, but for the numbers she had imperceptibly loaded with her chains. INDOLENCE (for so she was called) far from proceeding to open hostilities, did not attempt to turn their feet out of the path, but contented herself with retarding their progress; and the purpose she could not force them to abandon, she persuaded them to delay. Her touch had a power like that of the Torpedo, which withered the strength of those who came

## 36 THE HILL OF SCIENCE,

within its influence. Her unhappy captives still turned their faces towards the temple, and always hoped to arrive there; but the ground seemed to slide from beneath their feet, and they found themselves at the bottom before they suspected they had changed their place. The placid serenity which at first appeared in their countenance, changed by degrees into a melancholy languor, which was tinged with deeper and deeper gloom as they glided down the *stream of insignificance*; a dark and sluggish water, which is curled by no breeze, and enlivened by no murmur, till it falls into a dead sea, where the startled passengers are awakened by the shock, and the next moment buried in the gulph of oblivion.

Of all the unhappy deserters from the paths of Science, none seemed less able to return than the followers of Indolence.

The

The captives of Appetite and Passion could often seize the moment when their tyrants were languid or asleep to escape from their enchantment; but the dominion of Indolence was constant and unremitted, and seldom resisted till resistance was in vain.

AFTER contemplating these things, I turned my eyes towards the top of the mountain, where the air was always pure and exhilarating, the path shaded with laurels and other ever-greens, and the effulgence which beamed from the face of the Goddess seemed to shed a glory round her votaries. Happy, said I, are they who are permitted to ascend the mountain!—but while I was pronouncing this exclamation with uncommon ardour, I saw standing beside me a form of diviner features and a more benign radi-

## 38 THE HILL OF SCIENCE.

ance. Happier, said she, are those whom VIRTUE conducts to the mansions of Content! What, said I, does Virtue then reside in the vale? I am found, said she, in the vale, and I illuminate the mountain. I cheer the cottager at his toil, and inspire the sage at his meditation. I mingle in the crowd of cities, and bless the hermit in his cell. I have a temple in every heart that owns my influence; and to him that wishes for me I am already present. Science may raise you to eminence, but I alone can guide you to felicity! While the Goddess was thus speaking, I stretched out my arms towards her with a vehemence which broke my slumbers. The chill dews were falling around me, and the shades of evening stretched over the landscape. I hastened homeward, and resigned the night to silence and meditation.

ON

O N

R O M A N C E S,

A N I M I T A T I O N.

**O**F all the multifarious productions which the efforts of superiour genius, or the labours of scholastic industry, have crowded upon the world, none are perused with more insatiable avidity, or disseminated with more universal applause, than the narrations of feigned events, descriptions of imaginary scenes, and deline-

ations of ideal characters. The celebrity of other authors is confined within very narrow limits. The Geometrician and Divine, the Antiquary and Critic, however distinguished by uncontested excellence, can only hope to please those whom a conformity of disposition has engaged in similar pursuits; and must be content to be regarded by the rest of the world with the smile of frigid indifference, or the contemptuous sneer of self-sufficient folly. The collector of shells and the anatomist of insects is little inclined to enter into theological disputes: the Divine is not apt to regard with veneration the uncouth diagrams and tedious calculations of the Astronomer: the man whose life has been consumed in adjusting the disputes of lexicographers, or elucidating the learning of antiquity, cannot easily bend his thoughts to recent transactions, or readily interest himself in the  
unim-



unimportant history of his contemporaries : and the Cit, who knows no business but acquiring wealth, and no pleasure but displaying it, has a heart equally shut up to argument and fancy, to the batteries of syllogism, and the arrows of wit. To the writer of fiction alone, every ear is open, and every tongue lavish of applause ; curiosity sparkles in every eye, and every bosom is throbbing with concern.

It is however easy to account for this enchantment. To follow the chain of perplexed ratiocination, to view with critical skill the airy architecture of systems, to unravel the web of sophistry, or weigh the merits of opposite hypotheses, requires perspicacity, and presupposes learning. Works of this kind, therefore, are not so well adapted to the generality of readers as familiar and colloquial composition ;  
for

for few can reason, but all can feel; and many who cannot enter into an argument, may yet listen to a tale. The writer of Romance has even an advantage over those who endeavour to amuse by the play of fancy; who from the fortuitous collision of dissimilar ideas produce the scintillations of wit; or by the vivid glow of poetical imagery delight the imagination with colours of ideal radiance. The attraction of the magnet is only exerted upon similar particles; and to taste the beauties of Homer it is requisite to partake his fire: but every one can relish the author who represents common life, because every one can refer to the originals from whence his ideas were taken. He relates events to which all are liable, and applies to passions which all have felt. The gloom of solitude, the languor of inaction, the corrosions of disappointment, and the toil of thought, induce men to  
step

step aside from the rugged road of life, and wander in the fairy land of fiction; where every bank is sprinkled with flowers, and every gale loaded with perfume; where every event introduces a hero, and every cottage is inhabited by a Grace. Invited by these flattering scenes, the student quits the investigation of truth, in which he perhaps meets with no less fallacy, to exhilarate his mind with new ideas, more agreeable, and more easily attained: the busy relax their attention by desultory reading, and smooth the agitation of a ruffled mind with images of peace, tranquility, and pleasure: the idle and the gay relieve the listlessness of leisure, and diversify the round of life by a rapid series of events pregnant with rapture and astonishment; and the pensive solitary fills up the vacuities of his heart by interesting himself in the fortunes of imaginary beings, and forming connections with ideal excellence.

It

It is, indeed, no ways extraordinary that the mind should be charmed by fancy, and attracted by pleasure; but that we should listen to the groans of misery, and delight to view the exacerbations of complicated anguish, that we should chuse to chill the bosom with imaginary fears, and dim the eyes with fictitious sorrow, seems a kind of paradox of the heart, and only to be credited because it is universally felt. Various are the hypotheses which have been formed to account for the disposition of the mind to riot in this species of intellectual luxury. Some have imagined that we are induced to acquiesce with greater patience in our own lot, by beholding pictures of life tinged with deeper horrors, and loaded with more excruciating calamities; as, to a person suddenly emerging out of a dark room, the faintest glimmering of twilight assumes a lustre from the contrasted gloom. Others

thers, with yet deeper refinement, suppose that we take upon ourselves this burden of adfcitious sorrows in order to feast upon the consciousness of our own virtue. We commiserate others (say they) that we may applaud ourselves; and the sigh of compassionate sympathy is always followed by the gratulations of self-complacent esteem. But surely they who would thus reduce the sympathetic emotions of pity to a system of refined selfishness, have but ill attended to the genuine feelings of humanity. It would however exceed the limits of this paper, should I attempt an accurate investigation of these sentiments. But let it be remembered, that we are more attracted by those scenes which interest our passions, or gratify our curiosity, than those which delight our fancy: and so far from being indifferent to the miseries of others, we are, at the time, totally regardless of our own. And  
let

let not those, on whom the hand of time has impressed the characters of oracular wisdom, censure with too much acrimony productions which are thus calculated to please the imagination, and interest the heart. They teach us to think, by inuring us to feel : they ventilate the mind by sudden gusts of passion ; and prevent the stagnation of thought, by a fresh infusion of dissimilar ideas.

## S E L Á M A ;

## AN IMITATION OF OSSIAN.

WHAT soft voice of sorrow is in the breeze?—what lovely sun-beam of beauty trembling on the rock? Its bright hair is bathed in showers; and it looks, faint and dim, through its mist on the rushy plain. Why art thou alone—maid of the mournful look? The cold dropping rain is on the rocks of Torlé-na—

na—the blast of the defart lifts thy yellow locks. Let thy steps be in the hall of shells, by the blue winding stream of Clutha:—let the harp tremble beneath thy fingers; and the sons of heroes listen to the music of songs.

SHALL my steps be in the hall of shells, and the aged low in the dust? The father of Seláma is low behind this rock, on his bed of wither'd leaves:—the thistle's down is strewed over him by the wind, and mixes with his grey hair. Thou art fallen—chief of Etha! without thy fame; and there is none to revenge thy death. But thy daughter will sit, pale, beside thee, till she sinks, a faded flower, upon thy lifeless form. Leave the maid of Clutha—son of the stranger! in the red eye of her tears!

How fell the car-borne Connal—blue-eyed.



## AN IMITATION OF OSSIAN. 49

eyed mourner of the rock? Mine arm is not weak in battle; nor my sword without its fame.

CONNAL was a fire in his youth, that lighten'd through fields of renown:—but the flame weakly glimmered through grey ashes of age. His course was like a star moving through the heavens:—it walketh in brightness, but leaveth no track behind;—its silver path cannot be found in the sky. The strength of Etha is rolled away like a tale of other years; and his eyes have failed. Feeble and dark, he sits in his hall, and hears the distant tread of a stranger's steps—the haughty steps of Tonthormo, from the roar of Duvranno's echoing stream. He stood in the hall like a pillar of darkness, on whose top is the red beam of fire:—wide rolled his eyes beneath the gloomy arch of his brow; as flames in two caves of a rock, over-hung with the black pine of the de-

E. fart.

fart. They had rolled on Seláma, and he asked the daughter of Connal. Tonthormo ! breaker of shields ! thou art a meteor of death in war, whose fiery hair streams on the clouds, and the nations are withered beneath its path. Dwell, Tonthormo ! amidst thy hundred hills, and listen to thy torrent's roar ; but the soft sigh of the virgins is with the chief of Crono ;—Hidallan is the dream of Seláma—the dweller of her secret thoughts. A rushing storm in war—a breeze that sighs over the fallen foe—pleasant are thy words of peace, and thy songs at the mossy brook. Thy smiles are like the moon-beams trembling on the waves—Thy voice is the gale of summer that whispers among the reeds of the lake, and awakens the harp of Moilena with all its lightly trembling strings. Oh that thy calm light was around me ! my soul should not fear the gloomy chief of Duv-ranno.

# AN IMITATION OF OSSIAN. 51

ranno. He came with his stately steps.—  
 My shield is before thee, maid of my  
 love! a wall of shelter from the lightning  
 of swords. They fought. Tonthormo  
 bends, in all his pride, before the arm  
 of youth. But a voice was in the breast  
 of Hidallan—shall I slay the love of Se-  
 láma? Seláma dwells in thy dark bo-  
 som—shall my steel enter there? Live,  
 thou storm of war! He gave again his  
 sword. But—careless as he strode away—  
 rage arose in the troubled thoughts of the  
 vanquish'd. He mark'd his time, and  
 sidelong pierced the heart of the generous  
 son of Semo. His fair hair is spread on  
 the dust—his eyes are bent on the trem-  
 bling beam of Clutha. Farewel, light  
 of my soul! They are closed in dark-  
 ness. Feeble wast thou then, my father!  
 and in vain didst thou call for help.—  
 Thy grey locks are scatter'd, as a wreath  
 of snow on the top of a wither'd trunk;

which the boy brushes away with his staff; and careless singeth as he walks. Who shall defend thee, my daughter! said the broken voice of Etha's chief. Fair flower of the desert!—the tempest shall rush over thee; and thou shalt be low beneath the foot of the savage son of prey. But I will wither, my father! on thy tomb. Weak and alone I dwell amidst my tears—there is no young warrior to lift the spear—no brother of love! Oh that mine arm were strong!—I would rush amidst the battle. Seláma has no friend!

BUT Seláma has a friend, said the kindling soul of Reuthamir.—I will fight thy battles—lovely daughter of kings; and the sun of Duvranno shall set in blood. But when I return in peace, and the spirits of thy foes are on my sword, meet me with thy smiles of love—maid of Clutha!

Clutha ! with thy slow-rolling eyes. Let the soft sound of thy steps be heard in my halls, that the mother of Reuthamir may rejoice. Whence, she will say, is this beam of the distant land ?—Thou shalt dwell in her bosom.

My thoughts are with him who is low in the dust—son of Cormac ! But lift the spear—thou friend of the unhappy ! the light of my soul may return.

HE strode in his rattling arms. Tall—in a gloomy forest --- stood the surly strength of Duvranno. Gleaming---behind the dark trees---was his broad shield, like the moon when it rises in blood, and the dusky clouds sail low, and heavy, athwart its path. Thoughts, like the troubled ocean, rush'd over his soul---and he struck, with his spear, the sounding pine. Starting, he mix'd in battle

with the chief of woody Morna. Long was the strife of arms ; and the giant sons of the forest trembled at their strokes. At length Tonthormo fell---The sword of Reuthamir wav'd---a blue flame---around him. He bites the ground in rage. His blood is poured---a dark red stream---into Oithona's trembling waves. Joy brighten'd in the soul of Reuthamir ; when a young warrior came, with his forward spear. He moved in the light of beauty ; but his words were haughty and fierce. Is Tonthormo fallen in blood ---the friend of my early years ? Die---thou dark-soul'd chief ! for never shall Seláma be thine---the maid of his love. Lovely shone her eyes, through tears, in the hall of her grief, when I stood by the chief of Duvranno, in the rising strife of Clutha.

RETIRE, thou swelling voice of pride !  
thy

AN IMITATION OF OSSIAN. 55

thy spear is light as the taper reed. Pierce the roes of the desert; and call the hunter to the feast of songs---But speak not of the daughter of Connal---son of the feeble arm! Seláma is the love of heroes.

TRY thy strength with the feeble arm, said the rising pride of youth. Thou shalt vanish like a cloud of mist before the sun, when he looks abroad in the power of his brightness.

BUT thou thyself didst fall before Reuthamir, in all thy boasting words. As a tall ash of the mountain---when the tempest takes its green head, and lays it level on the plain.

COME from thy secret cave, Seláma! thy foes are silent and dark. Thou dove that hidest in the clefts of the rocks! the

storm is over and past. Come from thy rock, Seláma ! and give thy white hand to the chief---who never fled from the face of glory, in all its terrible brightness.

SHE gave her hand---but it was trembling and cold---for the spear was deep in her side. Red, beneath her mail, the current of crimson wandered down her white breast---as the track of blood on Cromla's mountains of snow, when the wounded deer slowly crosses the heath, and the hunters cries are in the breeze. Blest be the spear of Reuthamir ! said the faint voice of the lovely---I feel it cold in my heart. Lay me by the son of Semo. Why should I know another love ? Raise the tomb of the aged---his thin form shall rejoice, as he sails on a low-hung cloud, and guides the wintry storm. Open your airy halls, spirits of my love !

AND



## AN IMITATION OF OSSIAN. 57

AND have I quench'd the light which was pleasant to my soul? said the chief of Morna. My steps moved in darkness---why were the words of strife in thy tale? Sorrow, like a cloud, comes over my soul, and shades the joy of mighty deeds. Soft be your rest in the narrow house, children of grief! The breeze in the long whistling grass shall not awaken you. The tempest shall rush over you, and the bulrush bow its head upon your tomb---but silence shall dwell in your habitation; long repose, and the peace of years to come. The voice of the bard shall raise your remembrance in the distant land; and mingle your tale of woe with the murmur of other streams. Often shall the harp send forth a mournful sound; and the tear dwell in the soft eyes of the daughters of Morna.

SUCH were the words of Reuthamir,  
while

while he raised the tombs of the fallen.  
Sad were his steps towards the towers of  
his fathers, as---musing---he cross'd the  
dark heath of Lena, and struck---at  
times---the thistle's beard.

AGAINST

## AGAINST INCONSISTENCY IN OUR EXPECTATIONS.

“ WHAT is more reasonable, than that  
 “ they who take pains for any thing,  
 “ should get most in that particular,  
 “ for which they take pains? They  
 “ have taken pains for power; you for  
 “ right principles: they for riches; you  
 “ for a proper use of the appearances  
 “ of things: see whether they have the  
 “ advantage of you in that, for which  
 “ you have taken pains, and which  
 “ they neglect: If they are in power,  
 “ and you not; why will not you speak  
 “ the

## 60 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

“ the truth to yourself; that you do  
“ nothing for the sake of power; but  
“ that they do every thing? No, but  
“ since I take care to have right prin-  
“ ciples, it is more reasonable that I  
“ should have power. Yes, in respect  
“ to what you take care about, your  
“ principles. But give up to others  
“ the things in which they have taken  
“ more care than you. Else it is just  
“ as if, because you have right princi-  
“ ples, you should think it fit that  
“ when you shoot an arrow, you should  
“ hit the mark better than an archer,  
“ or that you should forge better than  
“ a smith.”

CARTER'S EPICTETUS.

**A**S most of the unhappiness in the world arises rather from disappointed desires, than from positive evil, it is of the utmost consequence to attain just notions

## IN OUR EXPECTATIONS. 61

notions of the laws and order of the universe, that we may not vex ourselves with fruitless wishes, or give way to groundless and unreasonable discontent. The laws of natural philosophy, indeed, are tolerably understood and attended to; and though we may suffer inconveniences, we are seldom disappointed in consequence of them. No man expects to preserve oranges through an English winter; or when he has planted an acorn, to see it become a large oak in a few months. The mind of man naturally yields to necessity; and our wishes soon subside when we see the impossibility of their being gratified. Now, upon an accurate inspection, we shall find, in the moral government of the world, and the order of the intellectual system, laws as determinate, fixed, and invariable as any in Newton's Principia. The progress of vegetation is not more certain than the growth  
of

## 64 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

up the pleasures of leisure, of a vacant mind, of a free unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a coarse-spun and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the Muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain, household truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments; but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. “But I cannot submit to drudgery like this---

## IN OUR EXPECTATIONS. 65

this---I feel a spirit above it." 'Tis well: be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may be purchased---by steady application and long solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these, and you shall be wise. "But (says the man of letters) what a hardship is it that many an illiterate fellow who cannot construe the motto of the arms on his coach shall raise a fortune and make a figure, while I have little more than the common conveniences of life." *Et tibi magna satis!*---Was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? Was it to be rich that you grew pale over the midnight lamp, and distilled the sweetness from the Greek and Roman spring? You have then mistaken your path, and ill

F

employed

## 66 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

employed your industry. "What reward have I then for all my labours?" What reward! A large comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears, and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man --- of God. A rich, flourishing, cultivated mind, pregnant with inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection. A perpetual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask besides?

"BUT is it not some reproach upon the œconomy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?" Not in the least. He made himself a mean dirty fellow for that very end. He has paid his health, his conscience, his liberty for it; and will you en-  
vy



## IN OUR EXPECTATIONS. 67

vy him his bargain? Will you hang your head and blush in his presence because he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought, because I have not desired them; it is because I possess something better. I have chosen my lot. I am content and satisfied.

You are a modest man---You love quiet and independence, and have a delicacy and reserve in your temper which renders it impossible for you to elbow your way in the world, and be the herald of your own merits. Be content then with a modest retirement, with the esteem of your intimate friends, with the praises of a blameless heart, and a delicate ingenuous spirit; but resign the splendid distinctions of the world to those who can better scramble for them.

## 68 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

THE man whose tender sensibility of conscience and strict regard to the rules of morality makes him scrupulous and fearful of offending, is often heard to complain of the disadvantages he lies under in every path of honour and profit. "Could I but get over some nice points, and conform to the practice and opinion of those about me, I might stand as fair a chance as others for dignities and preferment." And why can you not? What hinders you from discarding this troublesome scrupulosity of yours which stands so grievously in your way? If it be a small thing to enjoy a healthful mind, sound at the very core, that does not shrink from the keenest inspection; inward freedom from remorse and perturbation; un sullied whiteness and simplicity of manners; a genuine integrity

Pure in the last recesses of the mind;  
if you think these advantages an inadequate

quate recompense for what you resign, dismiss your scruples this instant, and be a slave-merchant, a director, or---what you please.

If these be motives weak, break off by times; and as you have not spirit to assert the dignity of virtue, be wise enough not to forego the emoluments of vice.

I much admire the spirit of the anti-ent philosophers, in that they never attempted, as our moralists often do, to lower the tone of philosophy, and make it consistent with all the indulgences of indolence and sensuality. They never thought of having the bulk of mankind for their disciples; but kept themselves as distinct as possible from a worldly life. They plainly told men what sacrifices were required, and what advantages they were which might be expected.

## 70 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omittis  
Hoc age deliciis -----

If you would be a philosopher these are the terms. You must do thus and thus : There is no other way. If not, go and be one of the vulgar.

THERE is no one quality gives so much dignity to a character as consistency of conduct. Even if a man's pursuits be wrong and unjustifiable, yet if they are prosecuted with steadiness and vigour, we cannot withhold our admiration. The most characteristic mark of a great mind is to chuse some one important object, and pursue it through life. It was this made Cæsar a great man. His object was ambition ; he pursued it steadily, and was always ready to sacrifice to it every interfering passion or inclination.

THERE is a pretty passage in one of Lucian's dialogues, where Jupiter complains

plains to Cupid that though he has had so many intrigues he was never sincerely beloved. In order to be loved, says Cupid, you must lay aside your ægis and your thunder-bolts, and you must curl and perfume your hair, and place a garland on your head, and walk with a soft step, and assume a winning obsequious deportment. But, replied Jupiter, I am not willing to resign so much of my dignity. Then, returns Cupid, leave off desiring to be loved---He wanted to be Jupiter and Adonis at the same time.

It must be confessed, that men of genius are of all others most inclined to make these unreasonable claims. As their relish for enjoyment is strong, their views large and comprehensive, and they feel themselves lifted above the common bulk of mankind, they are apt to slight that natural reward of praise and admiration

## 72 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

which is ever largely paid to distinguished abilities; and to expect to be called forth to public notice and favour: without considering that their talents are commonly very unfit for active life; that their excentricity and turn for speculation disqualifies them for the business of the world, which is best carried on by men of moderate genius; and that society is not obliged to reward any one who is not useful to it. The Poets have been a very unreasonable race, and have often complained loudly of the neglect of genius and the ingratitude of the age. The tender and pensive Cowley, and the elegant Shenstone, had their minds tinged by this discontent; and even the sublime melancholy of Young was too much owing to the stings of disappointed ambition.

THE moderation we have been endeavouring

vouring to inculcate will likewise prevent much mortification and disgust in our commerce with mankind. As we ought not to wish in ourselves, so neither should we expect in our friends contrary qualifications. Young and sanguine, when we enter the world, and feel our affections drawn forth by any particular excellence in a character, we immediately give it credit for all others; and are beyond measure disgusted when we come to discover, as we soon must discover, the defects in the other side of the balance. But nature is much more frugal than to heap together all manner of shining qualities in one glaring mass. Like a judicious painter she endeavours to preserve a certain unity of stile and colouring in her pieces. Models of absolute perfection are only to be met with in romance; where exquisite beauty, and brilliant wit, and profound judgment, and immaculate virtue are all blended

## 72 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

which is ever largely paid to distinguished abilities; and to expect to be called forth to public notice and favour: without considering that their talents are commonly very unfit for active life; that their excentricity and turn for speculation disqualifies them for the business of the world, which is best carried on by men of moderate genius; and that society is not obliged to reward any one who is not useful to it. The Poets have been a very unreasonable race, and have often complained loudly of the neglect of genius and the ingratitude of the age. The tender and pensive Cowley, and the elegant Shenstone, had their minds tinctured by this discontent; and even the sublime melancholy of Young was too much owing to the stings of disappointed ambition.

THE moderation we have been endeavouring



vouring to inculcate will likewise prevent much mortification and disgust in our commerce with mankind. As we ought not to wish in ourselves, so neither should we expect in our friends contrary qualifications. Young and sanguine, when we enter the world, and feel our affections drawn forth by any particular excellence in a character, we immediately give it credit for all others; and are beyond measure disgusted when we come to discover, as we soon must discover, the defects in the other side of the balance. But nature is much more frugal than to heap together all manner of shining qualities in one glaring mass. Like a judicious painter she endeavours to preserve a certain unity of stile and colouring in her pieces. Models of absolute perfection are only to be met with in romance; where exquisite beauty, and brilliant wit, and profound judgment, and immaculate virtue are all blended

## 74 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

blended together to adorn some favourite character. As an anatomist knows that the racer cannot have the strength and muscles of the draught-horse; and that winged men, gryffons, and mermaids must be mere creatures of the imagination; so the philosopher is sensible that there are combinations of moral qualities which never can take place but in idea. There is a different air and complexion in characters as well as in faces, though perhaps each equally beautiful; and the excellencies of one cannot be transferred to the other. Thus if one man possesses a stoical apathy of soul, acts independent of the opinion of the world, and fulfils every duty with mathematical exactness, you must not expect that man to be greatly influenced by the weakness of pity, or the partialities of friendship: you must not be offended that he does not fly to meet you after a short absence;  
or

or require from him the convivial spirit and honest effusions of a warm, open, susceptible heart. If another is remarkable for a lively active zeal, inflexible integrity, a strong indignation against vice, and freedom in reproving it, he will probably have some little bluntness in his address not altogether suitable to polished life; he will want the winning arts of conversation; he will disgust by a kind of haughtiness and negligence in his manner, and often hurt the delicacy of his acquaintance with harsh and disagreeable truths.

WE usually say---that man is a genius, *but* he has some whims and oddities---such a one has a very general knowledge, *but* he is superficial; &c. Now in all such cases we should speak more rationally did we substitute *therefore* for *but*.

He

## 76 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

He is a genius, *therefore* he is whimsical ;  
and the like.

It is the fault of the present age, owing to the freer commerce that different ranks and professions now enjoy with each other, that characters are not marked with sufficient strength : the several classes run too much into one another. We have fewer pedants, it is true, but we have fewer striking originals. Every one is expected to have such a tincture of general knowledge as is incompatible with going deep into any science ; and such a conformity to fashionable manners as checks the free workings of the ruling passion, and gives an insipid sameness to the face of society, under the idea of polish and regularity.

THERE is a cast of manners peculiar  
and becoming to each age, sex and pro-  
fession ;

## IN OUR EXPECTATIONS. 77

cession ; one, therefore, should not throw out illiberal and common-place censures against another. Each is perfect in their kind. A woman as a woman : a tradesman as a tradesman. We are often hurt by the brutality and sluggish conceptions of the vulgar ; not considering that some there must be to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and that cultivated genius, or even any great refinement and delicacy in their moral feelings would be a real misfortune to them.

LET us then study the philosophy of the human mind. The man who is master of this science will know what to expect from every one. From this man, wise advice ; from that, cordial sympathy ; from another, casual entertainment. The passions and inclinations of others are his tools, which he can use with

## 78 AGAINST INCONSISTENCY.

with as much precision as he would the mechanical powers; and he can as readily make allowance for the workings of vanity, or the biafs of self-interest in his friends, as for the power of friction, or the irregularities of the needle.

THE

## T H E

## CANAL AND THE BROOK.

## A REVERIE.

**A** Delightfully pleasant evening succeeding a sultry summer-day, invited me to take a solitary walk ; and leaving the dust of the highway, I fell into a path which led along a pleasant little valley watered by a small meandering brook. The meadow-ground on its banks had been lately mown, and the new grass  
was

was springing up with a lively verdure. The brook was hid in several places by shrubs that grew on each side, and intermingled their branches. The sides of the valley were roughened by small irregular thickets; and the whole scene had an air of solitude and retirement, uncommon in the neighbourhood of a populous town. The Duke of Bridgewater's canal crossed the valley, high raised on a mound of earth, which preserved a level with the elevated ground on each side. An arched road was carried under it, beneath which the brook that ran along the valley was conveyed by a subterraneous passage. I threw myself upon a green bank, shaded by a leafy thicket, and resting my head upon my hand, after a welcome indolence had overcome my senses, I saw, with the eyes of fancy, the following scene.

THE firm-built side of the aqueduct  
suddenly



suddenly opened, and a gigantic form issued forth, which I soon discovered to be the *Genius of the Canal*. He was clad in a close garment of a russet hue. A mural crown, indented with battlements, surrounded his brow. His naked feet were discoloured with clay. On his left shoulder he bore a huge pick-ax; and in his right hand he held certain instruments, used in surveying and levelling. His looks were thoughtful, and his features harsh. The breach through which he proceeded, instantly closed; and with a heavy tread he advanced into the valley. As he approached the brook, the *Deity of the Stream* arose to meet him. He was habited in a light green mantle, and the clear drops fell from his dark hair, which was encircled with a wreath of water lily, interwoven with sweet scented flag. An angling rod supported his steps. The *Genius of the Canal* eyed him with a con-

G

temptuous

temptuous look, and in a hoarse voice thus began.

“ HENCE, ignoble rill ! with thy scanty tribute to thy lord, the Mersey ; nor thus waste thy almost exhausted urn in lingering windings along the vale. Feeble as thine aid is, it will not be unacceptable to that master stream himself ; for, as I lately crossed his channel, I perceived his sands loaded with stranded vessels. I saw, and pitied him, for undertaking a task to which he is unequal. But thou, whose languid current is obscured by weeds, and interrupted by misshapen pebbles ; who lovest thyself in endless mazes, remote from any sound but thy own idle gurgling ; how canst thou support an existence so contemptible and useless ? For me, the noblest child of art, who hold my unremitting course from hill to hill, over vales and  
“ rivers ;

“ rivers ; who pierce the solid rock for  
“ my passage, and connect unknown lands  
“ with distant seas ; wherever I appear I  
“ am viewed with astonishment, and ex-  
“ ulting commerce hails my waves. Be-  
“ hold my channel thronged with capa-  
“ cious vessels for the conveyance of mer-  
“ chandise, and splendid barges for the  
“ use and pleasure of travellers ; my banks  
“ crowned with airy bridges and huge  
“ warehouses, and echoing with the busy  
“ sounds of industry. Pay then the ho-  
“ mage due from sloth and obscurity to  
“ grandeur and utility.”

“ I READILY acknowledge,” replied  
the Deity of the Brook, in a modest ac-  
cent, “ the superior magnificence and  
“ more extensive utility of which you so  
“ proudly boast ; yet, in my humble walk,  
“ I am not void of a praise, less shining,  
“ but not less solid than yours. The

“ nymph of this peaceful valley, rendered  
“ more fertile and beautiful by my stream ;  
“ the neighbouring sylvan deities, to whose  
“ pleasure I contribute, will pay a grate-  
“ ful testimony to my merit. The wind-  
“ ings of my course, which you so much  
“ blame, serve to diffuse over a greater  
“ extent of ground the refreshment of my  
“ waters ; and the lovers of nature and  
“ the Muses, who are fond of straying on  
“ my banks, are better pleased that the  
“ line of beauty marks my way, than if,  
“ like yours, it were directed in a straight,  
“ unvaried line. They prize the irregu-  
“ lar wildness with which I am decked,  
“ as the charms of beauteous simplicity.  
“ What you call the weeds which darken  
“ and obscure my waves, afford to the  
“ botanist a pleasing speculation of the  
“ works of nature ; and the poet and  
“ painter think the lustre of my stream  
“ greatly improved by glittering through  
“ them.

“ them. The pebbles which diversify  
“ my bottom, and make these ripplings  
“ in my current, are pleasing objects to  
“ the eye of taste; and my simple mur-  
“ murs are more melodious to the learned  
“ ear, than all the rude noises of your  
“ banks, or even the music that resounds  
“ from your stately barges. If the un-  
“ feeling sons of wealth and commerce  
“ judge of me by the mere standard of  
“ usefulness, I may claim no undistin-  
“ guished rank. While your waters, con-  
“ fined in deep channels, or lifted above  
“ the vallies, roll on, a useless burden to  
“ the fields, and only subservient to the  
“ drudgery of bearing temporary mer-  
“ chandises, my stream will bestow un-  
“ varying fertility on the meadows, du-  
“ ring the summers of future ages. Yet  
“ I scorn to submit my honours to the  
“ decision of those, whose hearts are shut  
“ up to taste and sentiment. Let me ap-

“ peal to nobler judges. The philosopher  
“ and poet, by whose labours the human  
“ mind is elevated and refined, and open-  
“ ed to pleasures beyond the conception  
“ of vulgar souls, will acknowledge, that  
“ the elegant deities who preside over  
“ simple and natural beauty, have in-  
“ spired them with their charming and  
“ instructive ideas. The sweetest and  
“ most majestic bard that ever sung, has  
“ taken a pride in owning his affection to  
“ woods and streams; and while the stu-  
“ pendous monuments of Roman gran-  
“ deur, the columns which pierced the  
“ skies, and the aqueducts which poured  
“ their waves over mountains and vallies,  
“ are sunk in oblivion, the gently wind-  
“ ing Mincius still retains his tranquil  
“ honours. And when thy glories, proud  
“ Genius! are lost and forgotten; when  
“ the flood of commerce, which now sup-  
“ plies thy urn, is turned into another  
“ course,

“course, and has left thy channel dry  
“and desolate; the softly-flowing Avon  
“shall still murmur in song, and his  
“banks receive the homage of all who  
“are beloved by Phœbus and the Muses.”

## O N

## MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

**I** Happened the other day to take a solitary walk amongst the venerable ruins of an old Abbey. The stillness and solemnity of the place were favourable to thought, and naturally led me to a train of ideas relative to the scene; when, like a good protestant, I began to indulge a secret triumph in the ruin of so many structures



## MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS. 89

structures which I had always considered as the haunts of ignorance and superstition.

YE are fallen, said I, ye dark and gloomy mansions of mistaken zeal, where the proud priest and lazy monk fatten'd upon the riches of the land, and crept like vermin from their cells to spread their poisonous doctrines through the nation, and disturb the peace of kings. Obscure in their origin, but daring and ambitious in their guilt ! See how the pure light of heaven is clouded by the dim glass of the arched window, stained with the gaudy colours of monkish tales and legendary fiction ; fit emblem how reluctantly they admitted the fairer light of truth amidst these dark recesses, and how much they have debased its genuine lustre ! The low cells, the long and narrow aisles, the gloomy arches, the damp and secret caverns which  
wind

wind beneath the hollow ground, far from impressing on the mind the idea of the God of truth and love, seem only fit for those dark places of the earth in which are the habitations of cruelty. These massy stones and scattered reliques of the vast edifice, like the large bones and gigantick armour of a once formidable ruffian, produce emotions of mingled dread and exultation. Farewel, ye once venerated seats ! enough of you remains, and may it always remain, to remind us from what we have escaped, and make posterity for ever thankful for this fairer age of liberty and light.

SUCH were for a while my meditations ; but it is cruel to insult a fallen enemy, and I gradually fell into a different train of thought. I began to consider whether something might not be advanced in favour of these institutions during the barbarous

barous ages in which they flourished ; and though they have been productive of much mischief and superstition, whether they might not have spread the glimmering of a feeble ray of knowledge, through that thick night which once involved the western hemisphere.

AND where, indeed, could the precious remains of classical learning, and the divine monuments of ancient taste, have been safely lodged amidst the ravages of that age of ferocity and rapine which succeeded the desolation of the Roman empire, except in sanctuaries like these, consecrated by the superstition of the times beyond their intrinsic merit ? The frequency of wars, and the licentious cruelty with which they were conducted, left neither the hamlet of the peasant nor the castle of the baron free from depredation ; but the church and monastery generally remained

remained inviolate. There Homer and Aristotle were obliged to shroud their heads from the rage of gothic ignorance ; and there the sacred records of divine truth were preserved, like treasure hid in the earth in troublesome times, safe, but unenjoyed. Some of the barbarous nations were converted before their conquests, and most of them soon after their settlement in the countries they over-ran. Those buildings which their new faith taught them to venerate, afforded a shelter for those valuable manuscripts, which must otherwise have been destroyed in the common wreck. At the revival of learning they were produced from their dormitories. A copy of the pandect of Justinian, that valuable remain of Roman law, which first gave to Europe the idea of a more perfect jurisprudence, and gave men a relish for a new and important study, was discovered in a monastery of Amalphi.

Amalphi. Most of the classics were recovered by the same means; and to this it is owing, to the books and learning preserved in these repositories, that we were not obliged to begin anew, and trace every art by slow and uncertain steps from its first origin. Science, already full grown and vigorous, awaked as from a trance, shook her pinions, and soon soared to the heights of knowledge.

NOR was she entirely idle during her recess; at least we cannot but confess that what little learning remained in the world was amongst the priests and religious orders. Books, before the invention of paper, and the art of printing, were so dear, that few private persons possessed any. The only libraries were in convents; and the monks were often employed in transcribing manuscripts, which was a very tedious, and at that time a very necessary task.

task. It was frequently enjoined as a penance for some slight offence, or given as an exercise to the younger part of the community. The monks were obliged by their rules to spend some stated hours every day in reading and study; nor was any one to be chosen abbot without a competent share of learning. They were the only historians; and though their accounts be interwoven with many a legendary tale, and darkened by much superstition, still they are better than no histories at all; and we cannot but think ourselves obliged to them for transmitting to us, in any dress, the annals of their country.

THEY were likewise almost the sole instructors of youth. Towards the end of the tenth century there were no schools in Europe but the monasteries, and those which belonged to episcopal residences;  
nor

nor any masters but the Benedictines. It is true, their course of education extended no further than what they called the seven liberal arts, and these were taught in a very dry and uninteresting manner. But this was the genius of the age, and it should not be imputed to them as a reproach that they did not teach well, when no one taught better. We are guilty of great unfairness when we compare the school-men with the philosophers of a more enlightened age: we should contrast them with those of their own times; with a high-constable of France who could not read; with kings who made the sign of the cross in confirmation of their charters, because they could not write their names; with a whole people without the least glimmering of taste or literature. Whatever was their real knowledge, there was a much greater difference between men of learning, and the bulk of the nation, at  
that

that time, than there is at present; and certainly, some of the disciples of those schools who, though now fallen into disrepute, were revered in their day by the name of the subtle doctor, or the angelic doctor, shewed an acuteness and strength of genius, which, if properly directed, would have gone far in philosophy; and they only failed because their enquiries were not the objects of the human powers. Had they exercised half that acuteness on facts and experiments, they had been truly great men. However, there were not wanting some, even in the darkest ages, whose names will be always remembered with pleasure by the lovers of science. Alcuin, the preceptor of Charlemagne; the first who introduced a taste for polite literature into France, and the chief instrument that prince made use of in his noble endeavours for the encouragement of learning; to whom the universities of  
Soissons,



Soissons, Tours and Paris owe their origin. The historians, Mathew Paris, William of Malmſbury, Savanarola. The elegant and unfortunate Abelard ; and, to crown the reſt, the Engliſh Franciſcan, Roger Bacon.

It may be here obſerved, that forbidding the vulgar tongue in the offices of devotion, and in reading the ſcriptures, though undoubtedly a great corruption in the Chriſtian church, was of infinite ſervice to the intereſts of learning. When the eccleſiaſtics had locked up their religion in a foreign tongue, they would take care not to loſe the key. This gave an importance to the learned languages ; and every ſcholar could not only read, but wrote and diſputed in Latin, which without ſuch a motive would probably have been no more ſtudied than the Chineſe. And at a time when the modern langua-

ges of Europe were yet unformed and barbarous, Latin was of great use as a kind of universal tongue, by which learned men might converse and correspond with each other.

INDEED, the monks were almost the only set of men who had leisure or opportunity to pay the least attention to literary subjects. A learned education (and a very little went to that title) was reckoned peculiar to the religious. It was almost esteemed a blemish on the savage and martial character of the gentry to have any tincture of letters. A man, therefore, of a studious and retired turn, averse to quarrels, and not desirous of the fierce and sanguinary glory of those times, beheld in the cloister a peaceful and honourable sanctuary; where, without the reproach of cowardice, or danger of invasion, he might devote himself to learning

learning, associate with men of his own turn, and have free access to libraries and manuscripts. In this enlightened and polished age, where learning is diffused through every rank, and many a merchant's clerk possesses more real knowledge than half the literati of that æra, we can scarcely conceive how gross an ignorance overspread those times, and how totally all useful learning might have been lost amongst us, had it not been for an order of men, vested with peculiar privileges, and protected by even a superstitious degree of reverence.

THUS the Muses, with their attendant arts (in strange disguise indeed, and uncouth trappings) took refuge in the peaceful gloom of the convent. Statuary carved a madonna or a crucifix. Painting illuminated a missal. Eloquence made the panegyric of a saint; and History com-

posed a legend. Yet still they breathed, and were ready, at any happier period, to emerge from obscurity with all their native charms and undiminished lustre.

BUT there were other views in which those who devoted themselves to a monastic life might be supposed useful to society. They were often employed either in cultivating their gardens, or in curious mechanical works; as indeed the nuns are still famous for many elegant and ingenious manufactures. By the constant communication they had with those of their own order, and with their common head at Rome, they maintained some intercourse between nations at a time when travelling was dangerous, and commerce had not, as now, made the most distant parts of the globe familiar to each other: and they kept up a more intimate bond of union amongst learned men of all countries,

tries, who would otherwise have been secluded from all knowledge of each other.

A monk might travel with more convenience than any one else; his person was safer, and he was sure of meeting with proper accommodations. The intercourse with Rome must have been peculiarly favourable to these northern nations; as Italy for a long time led the way in every improvement of politeness or literature: and if we imported their superstition, we likewise imported their manufactures, their knowledge, and their taste. Thus Alfred sent for Italian monks, when he wanted to civilize his people, and introduce amongst them some tincture of letters. It may likewise be presumed that they tempered the rigour of monarchy. Indeed they, as well as the sovereigns, endeavoured to enslave the people; but subjection was not likely to be so abject and unlimited where the object of it was divided, and

each showed by turns that the other might be opposed. It must have been of service to the cause of liberty to have a set of men, whose laws, privileges and immunities the most daring kings were afraid to trample on; and this, before a more enlightened spirit of freedom had arisen, might have its effect in preventing the states of christendom from falling into such entire slavery as the Asiatics.

SUCH an order would in some degree check the excessive regard paid to birth. A man of mean origin and obscure parentage, saw himself excluded from almost every path of secular preferment; and almost treated as a being of an inferior species by the high and haughty spirit of the gentry; but he was at liberty to aspire to the highest dignities of the church; and there have been many who, like Sextus V. and cardinal Wolsey, have by their industry

industry and personal merit alone raised themselves to a level with kings.

It should likewise be remembered that many of the orders were charitable institutions ; as the *knights of faith and charity* in the thirteenth century, who were associated for the purpose of suppressing those bands of robbers which infested the public roads in France ; the *brethren of the order of the redemption*, for redeeming slaves from the Mahometans ; the *order of St. Anthony*, first established for the relief of the poor under certain disorders ; and the *brethren and sisters of the pious and christian schools*, for educating poor children. These supplied the place of hospitals and other such foundations, which are now established on the broader basis of public benevolence. To bind up the wounds of the stranger was peculiarly the office of the inhabitants of

the convent; and they often shared the charities they received. The exercise of hospitality is still their characteristic, and must have been of particular use formerly, when they had not the conveniences and accomodations for travelling which we now enjoy. The learned stranger was always sure of an agreeable residence amongst them; and as they all understood latin, they served him for interpreters, and introduced him to a sight of whatever was curious or valuable in the countries which he visited. They checked the spirit of savage fierceness, to which our warlike ancestors were so prone, with the mildness and sanctity of religious influences; they preserved some respect to law and order, and often decided controversies by means less bloody than the sword, though confessedly more superstitious.

A PROOF that these institutions had a  
favourable



favourable aspect towards civilization, may be drawn from a late history of Ireland. “ Soon after the introduction of christianity into that kingdom ” says Dr. Leland, “ the monks fixed their habitations in deserts, which they cultivated with their own hands, and rendered the most delightful spots in the kingdom. These deserts became well policed cities, and it is remarkable enough that to the monks we owe so useful an institution in Ireland as the bringing great numbers together into one civil community. In these cities the monks set up schools, and taught, not only the youth of Ireland, but the neighbouring nations; furnishing them also with books. They became umpires between contending chiefs, and when they could not confine them within the bounds of reason and religion, at least terrified them by denouncing

“ cing divine vengeance against their  
“ excesses. ”

LET it be considered too, that when the minds of men began to open, some of the most eminent reformers sprung from the bosom of the church, and even of the convent. It was not the laity who began to think. The ecclesiastics were the first to perceive the errors they had introduced. The church was reformed from within, not from without; and like the silk-worm, when ripened in their cells to maturer vigour and perfection, they pierced the cloud themselves had spun, and within which they had so long been enveloped.

AND let not the good protestant be too much startled if I here venture to insinuate, that the monasteries were schools of some high and respectable virtues. Poverty,

ty, chastity, and a renunciation of the world, were certainly intended in the first plan of these institutions; and though, from the unavoidable frailty of human nature, they were not always observed, certain it is, that many individuals amongst them have been striking examples of the self-denying virtues: and as the influence they acquired was only built upon the voluntary homage of the mind, it may be presumed such an ascendancy was not originally gained without some species of merit. The fondness for monkery is easily deduced from some of the best principles in the human heart. It was, indeed, necessity, that, in the third century, first drove the christians to shelter themselves from the Decian persecution in the solitary desarts of Thebais; but the humour soon spread, and numbers under the name of hermits, or eremites, secluded themselves from the commerce

merce of mankind, chusing the wildest solitudes, living in caves and hollows of the rocks, and subsisting on such roots and herbs as the ground afforded them. About the fourth century they were gathered into communities, and increased with surprising rapidity. It was then that, by a great and sudden revolution, the fury of persecution had ceased, and the governing powers were become friendly to christianity. But the agitation of men's minds did not immediately subside with the storm. The christians had so long experienced the necessity of resigning all the enjoyments of life, and were so detached from every tie which might interfere with the profession of their faith, that upon a more favourable turn of affairs they hardly dared open their minds to pleasurable emotions. They thought the life of a good man must be a continual warfare between mind and body ; and having been  
long

long used to see ease and safety on the one side, and virtue on the other, no wonder if the association was so strong in their minds, as to suggest the necessity of voluntary mortification, and lead them to inflict those sufferings upon themselves, which they no longer apprehended from others. They had continually experienced the amazing effects of christianity in supporting its followers under hardship, tortures, and death; and they thought little of its influence in regulating the behaviour of life, if it produced none of those great exertions they had been used to contemplate. They were struck with the change from heathen licentiousness to the purity of the gospel; and thought they could never be far enough removed from that bondage of the senses which it had just cost them so violent a struggle to escape. The minds of men were working with newly received opinions, not yet mellowed

mellowed into a rational faith; and the young converts, astonished at the grandeur and sublimity of the doctrines which then first entered their hearts with irresistible force, thought them worthy to engross their whole attention. The mystic dreams of the Platonist mingled with the enthusiasm of the martyr; and it soon became the prevailing opinion, that silence, solitude, and contemplation were necessary for the reception of divine truth. Mistaken ideas prevailed of a purity and perfection far superiour to the rules of common life, which was only to be attained by those who denied themselves all the indulgences of sense; and thus the ascetic severities of the cloister succeeded in some degree to the philosophic poverty of the Cynic school, and the lofty virtues of the Stoic porch.

INDEED, it is now the prevailing taste  
in

in morals to decry every observance which has the least appearance of rigour ; and to insist only on the softer virtues. But let it be remembered, that self-command and self-denial are as necessary to the practice ; of benevolence, charity, and compassion, as to any other duty ; that it is impossible to live to others without denying ourselves ; and that the man who has not learned to curb his appetites and passions is ill qualified for those sacrifices which the friendly affections are continually requiring of him. The man who has that one quality of self-command will find little difficulty in the practice of any other duty ; as, on the contrary, he who has it not, tho' possessed of the gentlest feelings, and most refined sensibilities, will soon find his benevolence sink into a mere companionable easiness of temper, neither useful to others nor happy for himself. A noble enthusiasm is sometimes of use

to shew how far human nature can go. Though it may not be proper, or desirable, that numbers should seclude themselves from the common duties and ordinary avocations of life, for the austerer lessons of the cloister, yet it is not unuseful that some should push their virtues to even a romantic height; and it is encouraging to reflect in the hour of temptation that the love of ease, the aversion to pain, every appetite and passion, and even the strongest propensities in our nature, have been controuled; that the empire of the mind over the body has been asserted in its fullest extent; and that there have been men in all ages, who voluntarily renounce all the world offers, voluntarily suffer all it dreads, and live independent, and unconnected with it. Nor was it a small advantage, or ill calculated to support the dignity of science, that a learned man might be respectable in a coarse gown,  
a lea-



a leathern girdle, and bare-footed. Cardinal Ximenes preserved the severe simplicity of a convent amidst the pomp and luxury of palaces; and to those who thus thought it becoming in the highest stations to affect the appearance of poverty, the reality surely could not be very dreadful.

THERE is yet another light in which these institutions may be considered. It is, surely, not improper to provide a retreat for those, who stained by some deep and enormous crime, wish to expiate by severe and uncommon penitence those offences which render them unworthy of freer commerce with the world. Repentance is never so secure from a relapse as when it breaks off at once from every former connection, and entering upon a new course of life, bids adieu to every object that might revive the idea of temptations

I

tations which have once prevailed. In these solemn retreats, the stillness and acknowledged sanctity of the place, with the striking novelty of every thing around them, might have great influence in calming the passions; might break the force of habit, and suddenly induce a new turn of thinking. There are likewise afflictions so overwhelming to humanity, that they leave no relish in the mind for any thing else than to enjoy its own melancholy in silence and solitude; and to a heart torn with remorse, or oppressed with sorrow, the gloomy severities of La Trappe are really a relief. Retirement is also the favourite wish of age. Many a statesman, and many a warrior, sick of the bustle of that world to which they had devoted the prime of their days, have longed for some quiet cell where, like cardinal Wolsey or Charles V. they might shroud their grey hairs, and lose sight of the follies with

with which they had been too much tainted.

THOUGH there is, perhaps, less to plead for immuring beauty in a cloister, and confining that part of the species who are formed to shine in families and sweeten society, to the barren duties and austere discipline of a monastic life; yet, circumstances might occur, in which they would, even to a woman, be a welcome refuge. A young female, whom accident, or war, had deprived of her natural protectors, must, in an age of barbarism, be peculiarly exposed and helpless. A convent offered her an asylum where she might be safe, at least, if not happy; and add to the consciousness of unviolated virtue the flattering dreams of angelic purity and perfection. There were orders, as well amongst the women, as the men, instituted for charitable purposes,

poses, such as that of the *Virgins of love*, or *Daughters of mercy*, founded in 1660, for the relief of the sick poor; with others for instructing their children. These must have been peculiarly suited to the softness and compassion of the sex; and to this it is no doubt owing, that still, in catholic countries, ladies of the highest rank often visit the hospitals and houses of the poor; waiting on them with the most tender assiduity, and performing such offices as our protestant ladies would be shocked at the thoughts of. We should also consider, that most of the females who now take the veil, are such as have no agreeable prospects in life. Why should not these be allowed to quit a world which will never miss them? It is easier to retire from the public, than to support its disregard. The convent is to them a shelter from poverty and neglect. Their little community grows dear to them.

them. The equality which subsists among these sisters of obscurity, the similarity of their fate, the peace, the leisure they enjoy, give rise to the most endearing friendships. Their innocence is shielded by the simplicity of their life from even the idea of ill; and they are flattered by the notion of a voluntary renunciation of pleasures, which, probably, had they continued in the world, they would have had little share in.

AFTER all that can be said, we have reason enough to rejoice that the superstitions of former times are now fallen into disrepute. What might be a palliative at one time, soon became a crying evil in itself. When the fuller day of science began to dawn, the monkish orders were willing to exclude its brightness, that the dim lamp might still glimmer in their cell. Their growing vices have rendered them justly

odious to society, and they seem in a fair way of being for ever abolished. But may we not still hope that the world was better than it would have been without them; and that he, who knows to bring good out of evil, has made them, in their day, subservient to some useful purposes. The corruptions of christianity, which have been accumulating for so many ages, seem to be now gradually clearing away; and some future period may perhaps exhibit our religion in all its native simplicity.

So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains  
Of rushing torrents, and descending rains;  
Works itself clear, and as it runs refines,  
Till by degrees the floating mirror shines;  
Reflects each flower that on its borders grows,  
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shews.

ON THE PLEASURE DERIVED FROM  
OBJECTS OF TERROR;

WITH

SIR BERTRAND, A FRAGMENT.

**T**HAT the exercise of our benevolent feelings, as called forth by the view of human afflictions, should be a source of pleasure, cannot appear wonderful to one who considers that relation between  
I 4 the

the moral and natural system of man, which has connected a degree of satisfaction with every action or emotion productive of the general welfare. The painful sensation immediately arising from a scene of misery, is so much softened and alleviated by the reflex sense of self-approbation attending virtuous sympathy, that we find, on the whole, a very exquisite and refined pleasure remaining, which makes us desirous of again being witnesses to such scenes, instead of flying from them with disgust and horror. It is obvious how greatly such a provision must conduce to the ends of mutual support and assistance. But the apparent delight with which we dwell upon objects of pure terror, where our moral feelings are not in the least concerned, and no passion seems to be excited but the depressing one of fear, is a paradox of the heart, much more difficult of solution.

THE



## ON OBJECTS OF TERROR. 121

THE reality of this source of pleasure seems evident from daily observation. The greediness with which the tales of ghosts and goblins, of murders, earthquakes, fires, shipwrecks, and all the most terrible disasters attending human life, are devoured by every ear, must have been generally remarked. Tragedy, the most favourite work of fiction, has taken a full share of those scenes; "it has sapt full with horrors"—and has, perhaps, been more indebted to them for public admiration than to its tender and pathetic parts. The ghost of Hamlet, Macbeth descending into the witches' cave, and the tent scene in Richard, command as forcibly the attention of our souls as the parting of Jaffeir and Belvidera, the fall of Wolsey, or the death of Shore. The inspiration of *terror* was by the antient critics assigned as the peculiar province of tragedy; and the Greek and Roman tragedians

## 122 ON OBJECTS OF TERROR.

gedians have introduce some extraordinary personages for this purpose: not only the shades of the dead, but the furies, and other fabulous inhabitants of the infernal regions. Collins, in his most poetical ode to Fear, has finely enforced this idea.

Tho' gentle Pity claim her mingled part,  
Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine.

THE old Gothic romance and the Eastern tale, with their genii, giants, enchantments, and transformations, however a refined critic may censure them as absurd and extravagant, will ever retain a most powerful influence on the mind, and interest the reader independently of all peculiarity of taste. Thus the great Milton, who had a strong bias to these wildnesses of the imagination, has with striking effect made the stories "of forests and enchantments drear," a favourite subject with

## ON OBJECTS OF TERROR. 123

with his *Penferoso*; and had undoubtedly their awakening images strong upon his mind when he breaks out,

Call up him that left half-told  
The story of Cambuscan bold; &c.

How are we then to account for the pleasure derived from such objects? I have often been led to imagine that there is a deception in these cases; and that the avidity with which we attend is not a proof of our receiving real pleasure. The pain of suspense, and the irresistible desire of satisfying curiosity, when once raised, will account for our eagerness to go quite through an adventure, though we suffer actual pain during the whole course of it. We rather chuse to suffer the smart pang of a violent emotion than the uneasy craving of an unsatisfied desire. That this principle, in many instances, may invol-

## 124 ON OBJECTS OF TERROR.

voluntarily carry us through what we dislike, I am convinced from experience. This is the impulse which renders the poorest and most insipid narrative interesting when once we get fairly into it ; and I have frequently felt it with regard to our modern novels, which, if lying on my table, and taken up in an idle hour, have led me through the most tedious and disgusting pages, while, like Pistol eating his leek, I have swallowed and execrated to the end. And it will not only force us through dullness, but through actual torture—through the relation of a Damien's execution, or an inquisitor's act of faith. When children, therefore, listen with pale and mute attention to the frightful stories of apparitions, we are not, perhaps, to imagine that they are in a state of enjoyment, any more than the poor bird which is dropping into the mouth of the rattlesnake—they are chained by the ears, and fasci-

## ON OBJECTS OF TERROR. 125

fascinated by curiosity. This solution, however, does not satisfy me with respect to the well-wrought scenes of artificial terror which are formed by a sublime and vigorous imagination. Here, though we know before-hand what to expect, we enter into them with eagerness, in quest of a pleasure already experienced. This is the pleasure constantly attached to the excitement of surprise from new and wonderful objects. A strange and unexpected event awakens the mind, and keeps it on the stretch; and where the agency of invisible beings is introduced, of "forms unseen, and mightier far than we," our imagination, darting forth, explores with rapture the new world which is laid open to its view, and rejoices in the expansion of its powers. Passion and fancy co-operating elevate the soul to its highest pitch; and the pain of terror is lost in amazement.

HENCE

## 126 ON OBJECTS OF TERROR;

HENCE, the more wild, fanciful, and extraordinary are the circumstances of a scene of horror, the more pleasure we receive from it; and where they are too near common nature, though violently borne by curiosity through the adventure, we cannot repeat it or reflect on it, without an over-balance of pain. In the *Arabian nights* are many most striking examples of the terrible joined with the marvellous: the story of Aladdin and the travels of Sinbad are particularly excellent. The *Castle of Otranto* is a very spirited modern attempt upon the same plan of mixed terror, adapted to the model of Gothic romance. The best conceived, and most strongly worked-up scene of mere natural horror that I recollect, is in Smollett's *Ferdinand count Fathom*; where the hero, entertained in a lone house in a forest, finds a corpse just slaughtered in the room where he is sent to sleep, and the

## ON OBJECTS OF TERROR. 127

the door of which is locked upon him. It may be amusing for the reader to compare his feelings upon these, and from thence form his opinion of the justness of my theory. The following fragment, in which both these manners are attempted to be in some degree united, is offered to entertain a solitary winter's evening.

---

---

----- AFTER this adventure, Sir Bertrand turned his steed towards the wolds, hoping to cross these dreary moors before the curfew. But ere he had proceeded half his journey, he was bewildered by the different tracks, and not being able, as far as the eye could reach, to espy any object but the brown heath surrounding him, he was at length quite uncertain  
which

which way he should direct his course. Night overtook him in this situation. It was one of those nights when the moon gives a faint glimmering of light through the thick black clouds of a lowering sky. Now and then she suddenly emerged in full splendor from her veil; and then instantly retired behind it, having just served to give the forlorn Sir Bertrand a wide extended prospect over the desolate waste. Hope and native courage a while urged him to push forwards, but at length the increasing darkness and fatigue of body and mind overcame him; he dreaded moving from the ground he stood on, for fear of unknown pits and bogs, and alighting from his horse in despair, he threw himself on the ground. He had not long continued in that posture when the sullen toll of a distant bell struck his ears—he started up, and turning towards the sound discerned a dim twinkling light.

Instantly



Instantly he seized his horse's bridle, and with cautious steps advanced towards it. After a painful march he was stopt by a moated ditch furrounding the place from whence the light proceeded; and by a momentary glimpse of moon-light he had a full view of a large antique mansion, with turrets at the corners, and an ample porch in the centre. The injuries of time were strongly marked on every thing about it. The roof in various places was fallen in, the battlements were half demolished, and the windows broken and dismantled. A draw-bridge, with a ruinous gate-way at each end, led to the court before the building—He entered, and instantly the light, which proceeded from a window in one of the turrets, glided along and vanished; at the same moment the moon sunk beneath a black cloud, and the night was darker than ever. All was silent—Sir Bertrand fastened his steed

K

under

under a shed, and approaching the house traversed its whole front with light and flow footsteps—All was still as death—He looked in at the lower windows, but could not distinguish a single object through the impenetrable gloom. After a short parley with himself, he entered the porch, and seizing a massy iron knocker at the gate, lifted it up, and hesitating, at length struck a loud stroke. The noise resounded through the whole mansion with hollow echoes. All was still again—He repeated the strokes more boldly and louder—another interval of silence ensued—A third time he knocked, and a third time all was still. He then fell back to some distance that he might discern whether any light could be seen in the whole front—It again appeared in the same place and quickly glided away as before—at the same instant a deep full-  
len

len toll sounded from the turret. Sir Bertrand's heart made a fearful stop—He was a while motionless; then terror impelled him to make some hasty steps towards his steed—but shame stopt his flight; and urged by honour, and a resistless desire of finishing the adventure, he returned to the porch; and working up his soul to a full steadiness of resolution, he drew forth his sword with one hand, and with the other lifted up the latch of the gate. The heavy door, creaking upon its hinges, reluctantly yielded to his hand—he applied his shoulder to it and forced it open—he quitted it and stepped forward—the door instantly shut with a thundering clap. Sir Bertrand's blood was chilled—he turned back to find the door, and it was long ere his trembling hands could seize it—but his utmost strength could not open it again. After

several ineffectual attempts, he looked behind him, and beheld, across a hall, upon a large staircase, a pale bluish flame which cast a dismal gleam of light around. He again summoned forth his courage and advanced towards it—It retired. He came to the foot of the stairs, and after a moment's deliberation ascended. He went slowly up, the flame retiring before him, till he came to a wide gallery—The flame proceeded along it, and he followed in silent horror, treading lightly, for the echoes of his footsteps startled him. It led him to the foot of another staircase, and then vanished—At the same instant another toll sounded from the turret—Sir Bertrand felt it strike upon his heart. He was now in total darkness, and with his arms extended, began to ascend the second stair-case. A dead cold hand met his left hand and firmly grasped it, drawing him forcibly

forcibly forwards---he endeavoured to disengage himself, but could not---he made a furious blow with his sword, and instantly a loud shriek pierced his ears, and the dead hand was left powerless in his---He dropt it, and rushed forwards with a desperate valour. The stairs were narrow and winding, and interrupted by frequent breaches, and loose fragments of stone. The stair-case grew narrower and narrower, and at length terminated in a low iron grate. Sir Bertrand pushed it open---it led to an intricate winding passage, just large enough to admit a person upon his hands and knees. A faint glimmering of light served to show the nature of the place. Sir Bertrand entered---A deep hollow groan resounded from a distance through the vault---He went forwards, and proceeding beyond the first turning, he discerned the same blue flame which

had before conducted him. He followed it. The vault, at length, suddenly opened into a lofty gallery, in the midst of which a figure appeared, compleatly armed, thrusting forwards the bloody stump of an arm, with a terrible frown and menacing gesture, and brandishing a sword in his hand. Sir Bertrand undauntedly sprung forwards; and aiming a fierce blow at the figure, it instantly vanished, letting fall a massy iron key. The flame now rested upon a pair of ample folding doors at the end of the gallery. Sir Bertrand went up to it, and applied the key to a brazen lock---with difficulty he turned the bolt---instantly the doors flew open, and discovered a large apartment, at the end of which was a coffin rested upon a bier, with a taper burning on each side of it. Along the room on both sides were gigantic statues of black marble, attired

attired in the Moorish habits, and holding enormous sabres in their right hands. Each of them reared his arm, and advanced one leg forwards, as the knight entered; at the same moment the lid of the coffin flew open, and the bell tolled. The flame still glided forwards, and Sir Bertrand resolutely followed, till he arrived within six paces of the coffin. Suddenly, a lady in a shroud and black veil rose up in it, and stretched out her arms towards him---at the same time the statues clashed their sabres and advanced. Sir Bertrand flew to the lady and clasped her in his arms---she threw up her veil and kissed his lips; and instantly the whole building shook as with an earthquake, and fell asunder with a horrible crash. Sir Bertrand was thrown into a sudden trance, and on recovering, found himself seated on a velvet sofa, in the most magnificent room

he had ever seen, lighted with innumerable tapers, in lustres of pure crystal. A sumptuous banquet was set in the middle. The doors opening to soft music, a lady of incomparable beauty, attired with amazing splendor entered, surrounded by a troop of gay nymphs more fair than the Graces---She advanced to the knight, and falling on her knees thanked him as her deliverer. The nymphs placed a garland of laurel upon his head; and the lady led him by the hand to the banquet, and sat beside him. The nymphs placed themselves at the table, and a numerous train of servants entering, served up the feast; delicious music playing all the time. Sir Bertrand could not speak for astonishment---he could only return their honours by courteous looks and gestures. After the banquet was finished, all retired but the

the



the lady, who leading back the knight  
to the sofa, addressed him in these  
words: -----

-----

-----

ON

ON THE  
HEROIC POEM  
OF  
GONDIBERT.

**A** Person engaged in the pursuit of literary fame must be severely mortified on observing the very speedy neglect into which writers of high merit so frequently

frequently fall. The revolution of centuries, the extinction of languages, the vast convulsions which agitate a whole people, are causes which may well be submitted to in overwhelming an author with oblivion; but that in the same country, with little variation of language or manners, the delights of one age should become utter strangers in the next, is surely an immaturity of fate which conveys reproach upon the inconsistency of national taste. That noble band, the English Poets, have ample reason for complaining to what unjust guardians they have entrusted their renown. While we crown the statue of Shakespeare as the prince of dramatic poets, shall we forget the works, and almost the names of his contemporaries who possessed so much of a kindred spirit? Shall the Italian *Pastor Fido* and *Amyntas* stand high in our estimation, and the *Faithful Shepherdess*, the  
 most

most beautiful pastoral that a poet's fancy ever formed, be scarcely known amongst us? Shall we feel the fire of heroic poetry in translations from Greece and Rome, and never search for it in the native productions of our own country?

THE capital work of *Sir William D'avenant*, which I now desire to call forth from its obscurity, may well be considered as in a state of oblivion, since we no where meet with allusions to it, or quotations from it, in our modern writers; and few, I imagine, even of the professed students in English classics, would think their taste discredited by confessing that they had never read GONDIBERT. A very learned and ingenious critic, in his well-known *discourse upon poetical imitation*, has, indeed, taken notice of this poem; but though he bestows all due praise upon its author, yet the purpose for which  
it

it is mentioned being to instance an essential error, we cannot suppose that his authority has served to gain it more readers. Having very judiciously laid it down as a general observation, that writers by studiously avoiding the fancied disgrace of imitation are apt to fall into improper methods, forced conceits, and affected expression; he proceeds to introduce the work in question after the following manner. “ And, that the reader may not  
“ suspect me of asserting this without ex-  
“ perience, let me exemplify what has  
“ been here said in the case of a very emi-  
“ nent person, who, with all the advan-  
“ tages of art and nature that could be  
“ required to adorn the true poet, was  
“ ruined by this single error. The person  
“ I mean was SIR WILLIAM D’AVENANT,  
“ whose *Gondibert* will remain a perpetual  
“ monument of the mischiefs which must  
“ ever arise from this affectation of origi-  
“ nality in lettered and polite poets.”

A con-

A CONSIDERABLE degree of deference is undoubtedly due to a critic of such acknowledged taste and abilities; yet, since it appears to me that in this instance he writes under the influence of system and learned prejudice, I shall venture to canvass the principles upon which he supports his censure.

THE *method* of Gondibert is first objected to by Dr. Hurd, and upon two accounts. First, that the compass of the poem is contracted from the limits of the ancient epic, to those of the dramatic form; and by this means, pursuing a close accelerated plot, the opportunity is lost of introducing digressive ornaments, and of giving that minuteness of description which confers an air of reality. Now, since the author sets out with disavowing the common rules of epic poetry, it is certainly unjust to try him by those rules.

That

That effects are not produced which he never designed to produce can be no matter of blame; we have only to examine the justness of the design itself. It is wrong to expect incompatible qualities as well in compositions as in men. A work cannot at the same time possess force and diffusiveness, rapidity and minuteness.

EVERY one who has read Homer without prejudice, will, I doubt not, confess that the effects which should result from the great events of the story are much broken and impeded by that very minuteness of description, and frequency of digression which D'avenant is blamed for rejecting. The mind, warmed by an interesting narration, either in history, poetry, or romance, requires the writer to keep up with its exertions, and cannot bear him to flag in his pace, or turn aside in pursuit of other objects. The proper  
end

end of epic poetry, according to Dr. Hurd, is *admiration*. This, I imagine, would by no means have been allowed by our author, who seems rather to have placed it in interesting the passions, inculcating noble sentiments, and informing the understanding. Nor does it answer the idea of Horace, who praises Homer for his moral lessons, for teaching

----- quid sit pulcrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non.

However, a due limitation of subject, and something of rapidity in pursuing it, appear very necessary to the production of a considerable effect, of what kind soever; and a pompous display of foreign circumstances must always debilitate more than adorn. It appears an extremely bad compliment to an epic poem, to say that its chief beauty lies in the episodes. Indeed, epic poetry as existing in the models of antiquity,



antiquity, or their copies, by no means, I think, deserves the title given by critics, of the highest species of poetical composition. The tedious compass of the subject, the necessity of employing so large a share of the work in the relation of trifling occurrences for the sake of connexion, and the frequency of interruptions from collateral matter, inevitably cause both the poet's exertions and the reader's attention to intermit; and it is no wonder that Homer and Virgil too sometimes nod over their labours. The author of Gondibert seems to have been sensible of these inconveniences, and upon fair comparison of the epic and dramatic form, to have preferred the latter as capable of more spirit, and uniform dignity. We shall find, however, in reviewing the poem, that he has by no means restricted himself so narrowly as to preclude all ornamental deviations; and though

L they

they may not deserve the title of episodes, yet in his short and unfinished piece, they have all the desirable effect of a pleasing variety.

THE second objection which Dr. Hurd brings against the *method* of this poem, is the rejection of all supernatural agency, or what constitutes the *machinery* of the antient epic poem. But, for this, the critic himself offers a vindication, when he commends the author for not running into the wild fables of the Italian romancers, “which had too slender a foundation in the serious belief of his age to justify a relation to them.” Now by making this *belief* an essential rule of propriety with respect to the machinery, an author in an enlightened period, such as that of D’avenant, is, in effect, prohibited from its use altogether; for the abstracted nature of a pure and philosophical religion renders

renders it utterly unfit for the purposes of poetical fiction. The works of such Christian poets as have attempted to form a system of machinery upon the ideas of saints, angels, and tutelary spirits, will sufficiently prove that their religion, even with a mixture of popular superstition, was ill calculated to assist their imagination. Two writers, whom one would little expect to meet upon the same ground, Sir Richard Blackmore and Mons. Voltaire, have given instances of the same faulty plan in this respect; and nothing in the good Knight's epic labours can more deserve the attack of ridicule, than the divine mission in the *Henriade* for instructing his Majesty in the sublime mysteries of transubstantiation.

It was a very just charge which Plato brought against Homer, that he had greatly contributed to debase religion by

the unworthy and absurd representations he has given of the celestial beings, both with respect to their power, and their justice; and this is a fault which the poet must always in some measure be guilty of when he too familiarly mixes divine agency with human events. Nor does it appear more favourable to the greatness of the human personages that they are on all occasions so beholden to the immediate interposition of divine allies. The refined and judicious Virgil, though he has tolerably kept up the dignity of his Deities, has yet very much lowered his heroes from this cause. When we see Æneas, the son of a Goddess, aided by a God, and covered with celestial armour, with difficulty vanquishing the gallant Turnus, we conclude that without such odds the victory must have fallen on the other side. Under such a system of supernatural agency there was no other way of exalting

alting a man than making him, like Diomed, war against the Gods, or, like Cato, approve a cause which they had unjustly condemned. Surely a "*sober* intermixture of religion" can never be attributed to the antient epic. The poem of Gondibert is, indeed, without all this mixture of religious machinery, whether it be termed *sober* or extravagant. Human means are brought to accomplish human ends; and Cowley, in his commendatory lines prefixed to the work, has thus expressed his approbation of this part of the plan.

Methinks heroick poesie till now  
 Like some fantastique fairy-land did show;  
 Gods, Devils, Nymphs, Witches, and Giant's race,  
 And all but Man, in man's best work had place.  
 Thou, like some worthy Knight, with sacred arms  
 Dost drive the Monsters thence, and end the charms:  
 Instead of these dost Men and Manners plant,  
 The things which that rich soil did chiefly want.

WE shall see hereafter that the author has not neglected to introduce *religious sentiment*, and that of a more noble and elevated kind than can easily be paralleled in poetry.

BUT as the Poet, in the critic's opinion, did too much in banishing every thing supernatural in the events, so he did too little in retaining the fantastic notions of love and honour in the characters of his piece, which were derived from the same source of fiction and romance. There is, however, an essential difference between the cases. Artificial sentiments, however unnatural at first, may, from the operation of particular causes, become so familiar as to be adopted into the manners of the age. Instances of fashion in sentiment are almost as frequent as of fashion in dress. It is certain that the romantic ideas of love and honour did in fact prevail

vail in a high degree during a considerable period of the later ages, owing to causes which the same ingenious critic has in a very curious manner investigated, in his *letters on Chivalry and Romance*. They gave the leading tone to all polished manners; and gallantry was as serious a principle in the Italian courts, as love to their country in the states of Greece or old Rome. Supernatural agency in human events, on the other hand, however commonly pretended, or firmly believed, would never approach one step nearer to reality. After all, the author of Gondibert could not intend to reduce his poem to mere history; but he chose to take a poetical licence in the dignity and elevation of its sentiments, rather than in the marvellousness of its events. He thought he might attribute to the exalted personages of courts and camps the same nobleness of mind which himself, a courtier

and a soldier, possessed. If his work be allowed less grand and entertaining from the want of such ornaments as those of his predecessors are decorated with, it will yet be difficult to show how, at his time, they could have been applied consistently with good sense and improved taste.

So much in vindication of the general *method* of Sir W. D'avenant's poem. With respect to its *execution*, the justice of Dr. Hurd's censure cannot be controverted. That his sentiments are frequently far-fetched and affected, and his expression, quaint and obscure, is but too obviously apparent; and these faults, together with the want of harmony in versification, will sufficiently account for the neglect into which the work is fallen, though interesting in its story, and thick-sown with beauties. Readers who take up a book  
merely



merely for the indolent amusement of a leisure hour, cannot endure the labour of unharbouring a fine thought from the cover of perplexed expression. The pleasure arising from a flowing line or a rounded period is more engaging to them, because more easily enjoyed, than that from a sublime or witty conception. The author's faulty *execution*, however, arose from a source directly contrary to the "dread of imitation." Imitation itself lead him to it; for almost all the models of polite literature existing in his own country, and indeed in the other polished nations of Europe, were characterized by the very same vitiation of taste. Among our own writers it is sufficient to instance Donne, Suckling and Cowley for this constant affectation of wit and uncommon sentiment, and for a consequent obscurity of expression. Yet all these, and Sir W. D'avenant, perhaps, in a more eminent

## 154 ON THE HEROIC POEM

nent degree than the rest, had for great occasions, above the temptation of trifling, a majestic and nervous simplicity both of sentiment and expression; which, with our more refined taste and language, we have never been able to equal.

I SHOULD now hope that the reader would set out with me upon a nearer inspection of this poem, with the general idea of its being the work of an elevated genius, pregnant with a rich store of free and noble sentiment, fashioned by an intimate commerce with the great world, and boldly pursuing an original, but not an unskilful plan.

THE measure chosen for this poem is that which we now almost confine to elegy. This choice does not appear very judicious; for although our elegiac stanza possesses a strength and fullness which renders

ders it not unsuitable to heroic subjects, yet in a piece of considerable length, every returning measure must become tiresome from its frequent repetitions. And this is not the worst effect of returning stanzas, in a long work. The necessity of comprizing a sentence within the limits of the measure is the tyranny of Procrustes to thought. For the sake of a disagreeable uniformity, expression must constantly be cramped or extenuated. In general the latter expedient will be practised, as the easiest; and thus both sentiment and language will be enfeebled by unmeaning expletives. This, indeed, in some measure is the effect of rhyme couplets; and still more of the latin hexameter and pentameter. In our author, a redundancy of thought, running out into parentheses, seems to have been produced, or at least encouraged by the measure. But I think  
he

## 156 ON THE HEROIC POEM

he has generally preserved a force and majesty of expression.

It would have been highly injudicious for one who has rejected all poetical machinery, to have begun his poem with the antient form of invoking a Muse. Indeed, in all modern writers this invocation appears little better than an unmeaning ceremony, practised by rote from antient custom; and very properly makes a part of the *receipt for an epic poem* humourously laid down after the exact model of mechanical imitation, in the Spectator. Our author, with simple and unaffected dignity, thus opens at once into his subject :

Of all the Lombards, by their trophies known,  
Who fought fame soon, and had her favour long,  
King ARIBERT best seem'd to fill the throne,  
And bred most business for heroick song.

THIS conquering monarch, we are soon  
acquainted,

acquainted, was blest with an only child,  
the heroine of the story,

Recorded RHODALIND ! whose high renown  
Who miss in books not luckily have read ;  
Or vex'd with living beauties of their own  
Have shunn'd the wise records of lovers dead.

DESCRIPTIONS of female beauty have engaged the powers of poets in every age, who have exhausted all nature for imagery to heighten their painting ; yet the picture has ever been extremely faint and inadequate. Our poet judiciously confines his description of Rhodalind to the qualities of her mind, contenting himself with general praises, though in the high-flown gallantry of the times, of her personal charms.

Her looks like empire shew'd, great above pride ;  
Since pride ill counterfeits excessive height :  
But nature publish'd what she fain would hide,  
Who for her deeds, not beauty, lov'd the light.

To

## 158 ON THE HEROIC POEM

To make her lowly mind's appearance less,  
She us'd some outward greatness for disguise;  
Esteem'd as pride the cloyst'ral lowliness,  
And thought them proud who even the proud despise.

---

Oppressors big with pride, when she appear'd  
Blush'd, and believ'd their greatness counterfeit;  
The lowly thought they them in vain had fear'd;  
Found virtue harmless, and nought else so great.

Her mind (scarce to her feeble sex a-kin)  
Did as her birth, her right to empire show;  
Seem'd careless outward when employ'd within;  
Her speech, like lovers watch'd, was kind and low.

THE court of Aribert could not want  
men of high rank and accomplishments  
to pay their devotions at such a shrine.  
Among these "OSWALD the great, and  
greater GONDIBERT" moved in the most  
exalted sphere of renown. These noble  
personages

personages are characterized and contrasted with so masterly a hand that it would be an injury not to transcribe the whole.

In court Prince Oswald costly was and gay,  
Finer than near vain kings their fav'rites are;  
Outshin'd bright fav'rites on their nuptial day;  
Yet were his eyes dark with ambitious care.

Duke Gondibert was still more gravely clad,  
But yet his looks familiar were and clear;  
As if with ill to others never sad,  
Nor tow'rds himself could others practice fear.

The Prince could porpoise-like in tempests play,  
And in court storms on shipwreck'd greatness feed;  
Not frighted with their fate when cast away,  
But to their glorious hazards durst succeed.

The Duke would lasting calms to courts assure,  
As pleasant gardens we defend from winds;  
For he who bus'ness would from storms procure,  
Soon his affairs above his manage finds.

Oswald

## 160 ON THE HEROIC POEM

Oswald in throngs the abject people fought,  
With humble looks ; who still too late will know  
They are ambition's quarry, and soon caught  
When the aspiring eagle stoops so low.

The Duke did these by steady virtue gain ;  
Which they in action more than precept taste ;  
Deeds shew the good, and those who goodness feign  
By such even through their vizards are outfac't.

Oswald in war was worthily renown'd ;  
Though gay in courts, coarsely in camps could live ;  
Judg'd danger soon, and first was in it found ;  
Could toil to gain what he with ease did give.

Yet toils and dangers through ambition lov'd,  
Which does in war the name of virtue own :  
But quits that name when from the war remov'd,  
As rivers theirs when from their channels gone.

The Duke (as restless as his fame in war)  
With martial toil could Oswald weary make,  
And calmly do what he with rage did dare,  
And give so much as he might deign to take.

Him



Him as their founder cities did adore ;  
The court he knew to steer in storms of state ;  
In fields a battle lost he could restore,  
And after force the victors to their fate.

Of these great rivals, Gondibert was he whom the king had destined for his son-in-law, and the heir of his throne ; and Rhodalind too, in the privacy of her own breast, had made the same choice. This is related in a manner little inferior to Shakespear's famous description of concealed love.

Yet sadly it is sung that she in shades  
Mildly as mourning doves love's sorrows felt ;  
Whilst in her secret tears her freshness fades,  
As roses silently in lymbecks melt.

GONDIBERT, however, though of a nature by no means unsusceptible of the tender passion, had not as yet felt it for a particular object ; and Oswald, who stood forth as the public suitor to the princess,

M

was

## 162 ON THE HEROIC POEM

was incited by no other motive than ambition. Not Rhodalind herself (says the Poet)

Could he affect but shining in her throne.

HIS cause was powerfully pleaded with the princess by his sister Gartha, with whom we are next brought acquainted. A bold, full, majestic beauty; and a corresponding mind, high, restless, and aspiring, are her distinguishing features. The Prince and Duke were urged on to ambitious pursuits by their respective armies, which, just returned from conquest, lay encamped, the one at Brescia, and the other at Bergamo. That of Gondibert was composed of hardy youth whom he had selected from his father's camp, and educated in martial discipline under his own inspection. Temperance, chastity, vigilance, humanity, and all the high virtues of chivalry remarkably distinguish these  
young

young foldiers from those of later times. Beauty, indeed, commanded no less regard amongst them than in a modern camp; but it was an object of passion, and not of appetite; and was the powerful engine in their education which inspired them with noble and exalted sentiments. This is an idea on which our author, true to the principles of chivalry, very frequently enlarges, and always with peculiar force and dignity. In the present instance it is thus finely expressed.

But tho' the Duke taught rigid discipline,  
 He let them beauty thus at distance know;  
 As priests discover some more sacred shrine,  
 Which none must touch, yet all to it may bow.

When thus as suitors mourning virgins pass  
 Thro' their clean camp, themselves in form they draw,  
 That they with martial reverence may grace  
 Beauty, the stranger, which they seldom saw.

## 164 ON THE HEROIC POEM

They vail'd their ensigns as it by did move,  
 Whilst inward, as from native conscience, all  
 Worship'd the poet's darling godhead, Love ;  
 Which grave philosophers did Nature call.

INDEED, the influence of this passion in its purest and most exalted state, during the course of education, is a subject that might, perhaps, shine as much in the hands of a moralist as of a poet.

THE soldiers of Oswald were his father's brave veterans, in whose arms he had been bred. The story thus opened, and our attention awakened to the expectation of important events, the first canto is closed.

THE second canto introduces us to a solemn annual hunting, held by Duke Gondibert in commemoration of a great victory gained on this day by his grand-fire. His train was adorned by many gallant and noble persons, the friends of his family, and commanders in his army.

The

The hunting, which is described with much poetical spirit, terminates in a combat. As Gondibert and his party are returning weary homeward, an antient ranger hastily brings the tidings that Oswald, who had lain in ambush with a body of chosen horse, is advancing upon them. The Duke, rejecting all counsels of flight, prepares to receive his foes; and with an account of their principal leaders, and the order of their march, the canto concludes.

A PARLEY between the chiefs now succeeds, in which the character of each is well preserved. Oswald warmly accuses his rival for usurping his claims on the princess and the kingdom. Gondibert defends himself with temper, and disavows all ambitious designs. The other disdains accommodation; and the conference ends in a generous agreement to decide their differences in single fight.

WHEN every thing is prepared for the combat, Hubert, the brother of Oswald, steps forth with a general challenge to the opposite party. This is instantly accepted, and serves for a prelude to so many others, that a general engagement seems likely to ensue; when Oswald reproves their disobedient ardour: and, upon Huberts insisting to share his fate from the rights of brotherhood, it is at length decided that three persons of each party should enter the lists along with their generals. The duel then comes on, in the fourth canto; in which Oswald, Hubert, Paradine and Dargonet, are severally matched with Gondibert; Hurgonil, the lover of Orna, the Dukes sister; and Arnold and Hugo, generous rivals in Laura. Descriptions of battle are so frequent in epic poetry that scarcely any circumstances of variety are left to diversify them. Homer and his imitators have attempted

ed novelty in the multiplicity of their combats by every possible variation of weapon, posture, and wound. They considered the human body with anatomical nicety; and dwelt with a savage pleasure upon every idea of pain and horror that studied butchery could excite. I shall leave it to the professed admirers of antiquity to determine under what head of poetical beauty such objects are to be ranged. The terrible is certainly a principal source of the sublime; but a slaughter-house or a surgery would not seem proper studies for a poet. D'avenant has drawn little from them. His battles are rendered interesting chiefly by the character and situation of the combatants. When Arnold, the favoured lover of Laura, is slain by Paradine, Hugo, who had overthrown his antagonist, springs to avenge his rival, with these truly gallant expressions.

## 168 ON THE HEROIC POEM

Vain conqueror, said Hugo then, return!

Instead of laurel which the victor wears

Go gather cypress for thy brother's urn,

And learn of me to water it with tears.

Thy brother lost his life attempting mine;

Which cannot for Lord Arnold's loss suffice:

I must revenge, unlucky Paradine!

The blood his death will draw from Laura's eyes.

We rivals were in Laura,; but tho' she

My griefs derided, his with sighs approv'd,

Yet I, in love's exact integrity,

Must take thy life for killing him she lov'd.

His generosity, however, was fatal  
both to his foe and himself.

HUBERT, disabled by a wound in his arm,  
is dishonoured by receiving his life from  
his conqueror; upon which occasion the  
poet thus beautifully apostrophises.

O Honour, frail as life thy fellow flower!

Cherish'd and watch'd and hum'rously esteem'd,

Then worn for short adornments of an hour;

And is when lost, no more than life redeem'd.

THE



THE two chiefs are still left closely engaging; and when Hurgonil approaches to assist his lord, he is warmly commanded to retire. At length, after many mutual wounds, Oswald falls.

THE death of the Prince at the same time takes off all restraint from his party, and incites them to revenge. Led by the wounded Hubert, old Vasco, and Borgio, they attack the hunters, who, besides the fatigue of the chase, are represented as somewhat inferior in number. A furious battle, the subject of the fifth canto, now ensues. Gondibert shines forth in all the splendor of a hero. By his prowess his friends are rescued, and the opposite leaders overthrown in various separate encounters; and by his military skill the brave veterans of Oswald are defeated. The whole description of the battle is warm and animated.

IN Gondibert's generous lamentation  
 over the fallen, every heart must sympa-  
 thize with the following pathetic tribute  
 to the rival lovers.

Brave Arnold and his rival strait remove,  
 Where Laura shall bestrew their hallow'd ground;  
 Protectors both, and ornaments of love;  
 This said, his eyes out wept his widest wound.

Tell her now these, love's faithful saints, are gone  
 The beauty they ador'd she ought to hide;  
 For vainly will love's miracles be shown,  
 Since lover's faith with these brave rivals dy'd.

Say little Hugo never more shall mourn  
 In noble numbers, her unkind disdain;  
 Who now, not seeing beauty, feels no scorn;  
 And wanting pleasure, is exempt from pain.

When she with flowers Lord Arnold's grave shall strew,  
 And hears why Hugo's life was thrown away,  
 She on that rival's hearse will drop a few,  
 Which merits all that April gives to May.

The Duke now draws off his remaining  
 friends towards Bergamo: but on the jour-  
 ney,

ney, overcome by fatigue and loss of blood, he falls into a deadly swoon. His attendants, amidst their anxiety and confusion upon this event, are surprised, in the sixth canto, with the approach of a squadron of horse. This, however proves to be a friendly body, led by old Ulfín; who, after recovering the Duke by a cordial, declares himself to have been a page to his grandfire, and gives a noble relation of the character and exploits of his great master. The rumour of Oswald's attack brought him to the relief of Gondibert; and we have a description, which will be thought too much bordering upon the ludicrous, of the strange confusion among his maimed veterans, who in their haste had seized upon each other's artificial limbs. This unsightly troop, with the deficiencies of hands, arms, legs and eyes, can scarcely, with all the poet's art, be rendered a respectable object. Such instances

instances of faulty judgment are frequent in the writings of an age which was characterized by vigour of imagination rather than correctness of taste. Ulfín leads the Duke to the house of the sage Astragon, where, with the approach of night, the canto and the first book conclude.

IN the beginning of the second book, the poet carries us with Hurgonil and Tybalt and their noble dead, to Verona. The distant turrets first appearing, and then the great objects opening, one by one; the river, the palace, the temple, and the amphitheatre of Flaminius, form a landscape truly noble and picturesque. The view of the temple gives occasion to one of those elevated religious sentiments which dignify this poem.

This to soothe heaven the bloody Clephes built;  
As if heaven's king so soft and easy were,

So meanly hous'd in heaven, and kind to guilt,  
That he would be a tyrant's tenant here.

WE have then a lively description of a city morning; with the various and uncertain rumours of the late event, among the people. The rest of the canto is employed in a debate, rather tedious, though intermixed with fine sentiments, concerning the propriety of granting funeral rites to those who had perished in the quarrel.

THE progress of the fatal news is traced in the next canto. Aribert appears sitting in council in all the regal dignity. Tybalt relates the story. The king in a majestic speech complains of the toils and cares of empire, and predicts the baneful consequences likely to ensue. A more interesting scene is then disclosed, in which Tybalt declares the melancholy events of the combat to Rhodalind and the other ladies

## 174 ON THE HEROIC POEM

ladies of the court. Great art is shown in the delicate ambiguity by which they are prepared to receive the tidings. Laura is overpowered by her loss; and calling on Arnold's name, is conveyed away by her female attendants. This tender scene of sorrow is finely contrasted by the abrupt entrance of Gartha, in all the wild pomp of mingled rage and grief.

No sooner was the pity'd Laura gone,  
But Oswald's sister, Gartha the renown'd,  
Enters as if the world was overthrown,  
Or in the tears of the afflicted drown'd.

Unconquer'd as her beauty was her mind,  
Which wanted not a spark of Oswald's fire;  
Ambition lov'd but ne'er to love was kind;  
Vex'd thrones did more than quiet shades desire.

Her garments now in loose neglect she wore,  
As suited to her wild dishevell'd hair;

IN

IN the fury of her passion she breaks out into execrations against the innocent.

Blasted be all your beauties, Rhodalind !  
 Till you a shame and terror be to sight ;  
 Unwing'd be Love, and slow as he is blind,  
 Who with your looks poison'd my brother's fight !

AT length she mounts her chariot, and flies with the wings of revenge to the veteran camp at Brescia. The terror impressed on the people by her hasty departure is imaged with great sublimity.

She seem'd their city's Genius as she pass'd,  
 Who, by their sins expell'd, would ne'er return,

THE third canto brings us to Brescia, where Hubert's arrival with the dead body of Oswald excites every emotion of surprise, grief and fury in the breasts of the  
 brave

## 176 ON THE HEROIC POEM

brave veterans. They spend the night in this storm of contending passions; and at day-break assemble round the tent of Hubert, who by a noble harangue gives additional fire to their revenge. They instantly arm, and demand to be led to Bergamo; when Gartha arrives. She turns their vengeance against the court, where she represents the triumph of Gondibert's faction, and the dishonour cast upon their own. The rage discovered in her countenance, overpowering the symptoms of grief, is painted with amazing grandeur in the following simile:

The Sun did thus to threat'ned nature show  
 His anger red, whilst guilt look'd pale in all,  
 When clouds of floods did hang about his brow;  
 And then shrunk back to let that anger fall.

THIS tempest is, however, allayed in the next canto by the arrival of the wife  
 Hermegild;



Hermegild; who, though grown aged in war and politics, is possessed with a youthful passion for Gartha. He solemnly binds his services to their party, for the reward of Gartha's love; but persuades them to submit to more cautious and pacific measures. Gartha returns with him to the court; and the funeral of Oswald with Roman rites, "Which yet the world's last law had not forbid," is described in the remaining part of the canto.

FROM scenes of rage and tumult the poet then leads us to the quiet shades of philosophy in the house of Astragon. This change is not better calculated for the reader's relief, than for a display of the richness and elevation of the writer's mind. That the friend of Hobbes should despise the learned lumber of the schools will not be thought extraordinary; but that he should distinctly mark out such

N

plans

## 178 ON THE HEROIC POEM

plans of acquiring knowledge as have since been pursued with the greatest success, may well be deemed a remarkable proof of high and comprehensive genius. In Astragon's domain is a retired building, upon which is written in large letters, GREAT NATURE'S OFFICE. Here sit certain venerable sages, stiled *Nature's Registers*, busied in recording what is brought them by a throng called their *Intelligencers*. These men are diversly employed in exploring the haunts of beasts, of birds and of fishes, and collecting observations of their manners, their prey, their increase, and every circumstance of their œconomy. Near this place is NATURE'S NURSERY, stocked with every species of plants, of which the several properties and virtues are diligently examined. Is it not striking to find in the *house of Astragon* so exact a model of the *school of Linnaeus*?

WE

WE are next led to the CABINET OF DEATH; a receptacle for skeletons and anatomical curiosities of every kind: and from thence, by a pleasing analogy, to the library, or, as it is termed, the MONUMENT OF BANISH'D MINDS. The feelings of his guests on entering this room are thus described;

Where, when they thought they saw in well fought books,  
Th' assembled souls of all that men held wise,  
It bred such awful rev'rence in their looks  
As if they saw the bury'd writers rise.

THE poet then goes through a particular survey of the authors, distinguished into their several periods, countries, and professions; in which he exhibits a great extent of learning, and, much more to his honour, a sound and liberal judgment of what is truly valuable in learning. Of this, his account of the polemic divines will be thought no unfavourable specimen.

## 180 ON THE HEROIC POEM

About this sacred little book did stand  
Unwieldy volumes, and in number great;  
And long it was since any reader's hand  
Had reach'd them from their unfrequented seat.

For a deep dust (which time does softly shed,  
Where only time does come) their covers bear;  
On which grave spiders streets of webs had spread,  
Subtle, and flight, as the grave writers were.

In these heaven's holy fire does vainly burn,  
Nor warms, nor lights, but is in sparkles spent;  
Where froward authors with disputes have torn  
The garment seamless as the firmament.

If the subjects of this canto appear more noble and elevated than those which usually employ the episodes of heroic poetry, that of the ensuing one must strike with still superior dignity. Having acquainted us with the philosophy of his admired sage, the poet now, by a beautiful kind of allegory, instructs us in his religion. Astragon had dedicated three temples, to PRAYER, to PENITENCE, and  
to

to PRAISE. The *temple of Prayer* is described as a building quite plain, open, and without bells; since nothing should tempt or summon to an office to which our own wants invite us. The duty of *Penitence* being a severity unpleasing to nature, its *temple* is contrived, by its solemn and uncommon appearance, to catch the sense. It is a vast building of black marble, hung with black, and furnished with that “dim religious light” which poets have so finely employed to excite kindred ideas of gloom and melancholy: but none, I think, have painted it with such strength of colouring as our author:

Black curtains hide the glass; whilst from on high  
 A winking lamp still threatens all the room,  
 As if the lazy flame just now would die:  
 Such will the sun's last light appear at doom.

A tolling bell calls to the temple; and

every other circumstance belonging to it is imagined with great propriety and beauty.

BUT the poet's greatest exertions are reserved for his favourite *temple of Praise*. A general shout of joy is the summons to it. The building in its materials and architecture is gay and splendid beyond the most sumptuous palace. The front is adorned with figures of all kinds of musical instruments ; all, as he most beautifully expresses it,

That joy did e'er invent, or breath inspir'd,  
Or flying fingers touch'd into a voice.

The statues without, the pictures within, the decorations, and the choir of worshippers, are all suited with nice judgment, and described with genuine poetry. This distinguished canto concludes with  
these

these noble stanzas, the sum and moral,  
as it were, of the whole.

Praise is devotion fit for mighty minds ;  
The diff'ring world's agreeing sacrifice ;  
Where heaven divided faiths united finds :  
But Prayer in various discord upwards flies.

For Prayer the ocean is, where diversly  
Men steer their course, each to a sev'ral coast ;  
Where all our interests so discordant be  
That half beg winds by which the rest are lost.

By Penitence when we ourselves forsake,  
'Tis but in wise design on piteous heav'n ;  
In Praise we nobly give what God may take,  
And are without a beggar's blush forgiv'n.

Its utmost force, like powder's, is unknown ;  
And tho' weak kings excess of Praise may fear,  
Yet when 'tis here, like powder, dangerous grown,  
Heav'ns vault receives what would the palace tear.

The last thought will be termed, in this  
cold age, a conceit ; and so may every  
N 4 thing

thing that distinguishes wit and poetry from plain sense and prose.

THE wonders of the *house of Astragon* are not yet exhausted.

To Astragon heaven for succession gave  
One only pledge, and BIRTHA was her name.

THIS maid, her father's humble disciple and assistant, educated in the bosom of rural simplicity, is rendered a more charming object than even the renowned Rhodalind upon her throne.

Courts she ne'er saw, yet courts could have undone  
With untaught looks and an unpractis'd heart;  
Her nets the most prepar'd could never shun,  
For Nature spread them in the scorn of Art.

BUT I check my desire of copying more from this exquisitely pleasing picture. My intention is to excite curiosity,  
not



not to gratify it. I hope I have already done enough for that purpose; and since the rest of this unfinished story may be comprized in a short compass, I shall proceed, with but few interruptions, to conclude a paper already swelled to an unexpected bulk.

THAT the unpractised BIRTHA should entertain an unresisted passion for the noblest of his sex; and that Gondibert, whose want of ambition alone had secured him from the charms of Rhodalind, should bow to those of his lovely hostess and handmaid, will be thought a very natural turn in the story; upon which, however, the reader may foresee the most interesting events depending. The progress of their love, though scarcely known to themselves, is soon discovered by the sage Astragon. This is expressed by the poet with a very fine turn of a common thought.

When

## 186 ON THE HEROIC POEM

When all these symptoms he observed, he knows  
From Alga which is rooted deep in seas,  
To the high Cedar that on mountains grows,  
No sov'reign herb is found for their disease.

THE remainder of this poem, consisting of a third book written during the author's imprisonment, is composed of several detached scenes, in which the main plot lies ripening for future action. Rivals are raised in BIRTHA. Flattering advances from the court, and more open declarations of love from Rhodalind, are in vain employed to assail the constancy of Gondibert. Various conflicts of passion arise, and interesting situations, well imagined, and painted in lively colours. Much is given, as in the former parts, to the introduction of elevated sentiment; with one example of which I shall finish my quotations. Several well-born youths are placed about the person of Gondibert as his pages, whose education consists of the

the following great lessons from their lord.

But with the early sun he rose, and taught  
 These youths by growing Virtue to grow great;  
 Shew'd greatness is without it blindly fought,  
 A desperate charge which ends in base retreat.

He taught them Shame, the sudden sense of ill;  
 Shame, nature's hasty conscience, which forbids  
 Weak inclination ere it grows to will,  
 Or stays rash will before it grows to deeds.

He taught them Honour, Virtue's bashfulness;  
 A fort so yieldless that it fears to treat;  
 Like power it grows to nothing, growing less;  
 Honour, the moral conscience of the great.

He taught them Kindness; soul's civility,  
 In which, nor courts, nor cities have a part;  
 For theirs is fashion, this from falsehood free,  
 Where love and pleasure know no lust nor art.

And Love he taught; the soul's stol'n visit made  
 Tho' froward age watch hard, and law forbid;  
 Her

## 188 ON THE HEROIC POEM

Her walks no spy has trac'd, nor mountain staid;  
Her friendship's cause is as the loadstone hid.

He taught them love of Toil; Toil which does keep  
Obstructions from the mind, and quench the blood;  
Ease but belongs to us like sleep, and sleep,  
Like Opium, is our med'cine, not our food.

THE plot is at length involved in so many intricate and apparently unsurmountable difficulties, that it is scarce possible to conceive a satisfactory termination. Perhaps the poet was sensible of a want of power to extricate himself, and chose thus to submit to a voluntary bankruptcy of invention, rather than hazard his reputation by going further. In his postscript, indeed, he excuses himself on account of sickness and approaching dissolution. However disappointed we may be by his abrupt departure from scenes which he has filled with confusion, we ought not to forget the pleasures already

ready received from them. "If (says he to his reader, with more than the spirit of a dying man) thou art one of those who has been warmed with poetic fire, I reverence thee as my judge." From such a judicature, this NOBLE FRAGMENT would, I doubt not, acquire for him what the critic laments his having lost, "the possession of that true and permanent glory of which his large soul appears to have been full." \*

\* Disc. on Poetical Imitation.

AN

( 190 )

A N

E N Q U I R Y

INTO THOSE KINDS OF

D I S T R E S S

WHICH EXCITE

AGREEABLE SENSATIONS.

**I**T is undoubtedly true, though a phæ-  
nomenon of the human mind difficult  
to account for, that the representation of  
distress frequently gives pleasure; from  
which

which general observation many of our modern writers of tragedy and romance seem to have drawn this inference, that in order to please they have nothing more to do than to paint distress in natural and striking colours. With this view, they heap together all the afflicting events and dismal accidents their imagination can furnish; and when they have half broke the reader's heart, they expect he should thank them for his agreeable entertainment. An author of this class sits down, pretty much like an inquisitor, to compute how much suffering he can inflict upon the hero of his tale before he makes an end of him: with this difference, indeed, that the inquisitor only tortures those who are at least reputed criminals; whereas the writer generally chooses the most excellent character in his piece for the subject of his persecution. The great criterion of excellence is placed in being  
able

able to draw tears plentifully; and concluding we shall weep the more, the more the picture is loaded with doleful events, they go on telling

————— of sorrows upon sorrows  
Even to a lamentable length of woe.

A MONARCH once proposed a reward for the discovery of a new pleasure; but if any one could find out a new torture, or non-descript calamity, he would be more entitled to the applause of those who fabricate books of entertainment.

BUT the springs of pity require to be touched with a more delicate hand; and it is far from being true that we are agreeably affected by every thing that excites our sympathy. It shall therefore be the business of this Essay to distinguish those kinds of distress which are pleasing in the  
repre-



## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 193

representation, from those which are really painful and disgusting.

THE view or relation of mere misery can never be pleasing. We have, indeed, a strong sympathy with all kinds of misery; but it is a feeling of pure unmixed pain, similar in kind, though not equal in degree to what we feel for ourselves on the like occasions; and never produces that melting sorrow, that thrill of tenderness, to which we give the name of pity. They are two distinct sensations, marked by very different external expression. One causes the nerves to tingle, the flesh to shudder, and the whole countenance to be thrown into strong contractions; the other relaxes the frame, opens the features, and produces tears. When we crush a noxious or loathsome animal, we may sympathize strongly with the pain it suffers, but with far different  
O emotions

emotions from the tender sentiment we feel for the dog of Ulysses, who crawled to meet his long-lost master, looked up, and died at his feet. Extreme bodily pain is perhaps the most intense suffering we are capable of, and if the fellow-feeling with misery alone was grateful to the mind, the exhibition of a man in a fit of the tooth-ach, or under a chirurgical operation, would have a fine effect in a tragedy. But there must be some other sentiment combined with this kind of instinctive sympathy, before it becomes in any degree pleasing, or produces the sweet emotion of pity. This sentiment is love, esteem, the complacency we take in the contemplation of beauty, of mental or moral excellence, called forth and rendered more interesting, by circumstances of pain and danger. Tenderness is, much more properly than sorrow, the spring of tears; for it affects us in that manner  
whether

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 195

whether combined with joy or grief; perhaps more in the former case than the latter. And I believe we may venture to assert that no distress which produces tears is wholly without a mixture of pleasure. When Joseph's brethren were sent to buy corn, if they had perished in the desert by wild beasts, or been reduced (as in the horrid adventures of a Pierre de Vaud) to eat one another, we might have shuddered, but we should not have wept for them. The gush of tears is when Joseph made himself known to his brethren, and fell on their neck, and kissed them. When Hubert prepares to burn out prince Arthur's eyes, the shocking circumstance, of itself, would only affect us with horror; it is the amiable simplicity of the young prince, and his innocent affection to his intended murderer that draws our tears, and excites that tender sorrow which we love to feel,

and which refines the heart while we do feel it.

WE see, therefore, from this view of our internal feelings, that no scenes of misery ought to be exhibited which are not connected with the display of some moral excellence or agreeable quality. If fortitude, power, and strength of mind are called forth, they produce the sublime feelings of wonder and admiration: if the softer qualities of gentleness, grace, and beauty, they inspire love and pity. The management of these latter emotions is our present object.

AND let it be remembered, in the first place, that the misfortunes which excite pity must not be too horrid and overwhelming. The mind is rather stunned than softened by great calamities. They are little circumstances that work most sensibly

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 197

fenfibly upon the tender feelings. For this reason, a well written novel generally draws more tears than a tragedy. The distreffes of tragedy are more calculated to amaze and terrify, than to move compassion. Battles, torture and death are in every page. The dignity of the characters, the importance of the events, the pomp of verfe and imagery interest the grander paffions, and raife the mind to an enthufiafm little favourable to the weak and languid notes of pity. The tragedies of Young are in a fine ftrain of poetry, and the fituations are worked up with great energy, but the pictures are in too deep a fhade: all his pieces are full of violent and gloomy paffions, and fo over-wrought with horror, that inftead of awakening any pleafing fenfibility, they leave on the mind an impreffion of fadnefs mixed with terror. Shakespear is fometimes guilty of prefenting fcenes too

shocking. Such is the trampling out of Gloster's eyes; and such is the whole play of Titus Andronicus. But Lee, beyond all others, abounds with this kind of images. He delighted in painting the most daring crimes, and cruel massacres; and though he has shewn himself extremely capable of raising tenderness, he continually checks its course by shocking and disagreeable expressions. His pieces are in the same taste with the pictures of Spagnolet, and there are many scenes in his tragedies which no one can relish who would not look with pleasure on the flaying of St. Bartholomew. The following speech of Marguerité, in the massacre of Paris, was, I suppose, intended to express the utmost tenderness of affection.

Die for him! that's too little; I could burn  
Piece-meal away, or bleed to death by drops,  
Be flay'd alive, then broke upon the wheel,  
Yet with a smile endure it all for Guise:

And

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 199

And when let loose from torments, all one wound,  
Run with my mangled arms, and crush him dead.

IMAGES like these will never excite the softer passions. We are less moved at the description of an Indian tortured with all the dreadful ingenuity of that savage people, than with the fatal mistake of the lover in the Spectator, who pierced an artery in the arm of his mistress as he was letting her blood. Tragedy and romance-writers are likewise apt to make too free with the more violent expressions of passion and distress, by which means they lose their effect. Thus an ordinary author does not know how to express any strong emotion otherwise than by swoonings or death; so that a person experienced in this kind of reading, when a girl faints away at parting with her lover, or a hero kills himself for the loss of his mistress, considers it as the established

etiquette upon such occasions, and turns over the pages with the utmost coolness and unconcern; whereas real sensibility and a more intimate knowledge of human nature would have suggested a thousand little touches of grief, which though slight are irresistible. We are too gloomy a people. Some of the French novels are remarkable for little affecting incidents, imagined with delicacy and told with grace. Perhaps they have a better turn than we for this kind of writing.

A JUDICIOUS author will never attempt to raise pity by any thing mean or disgusting. As we have already observed, there must be a degree of complacence mixed with our sorrows to produce an agreeable sympathy; nothing, therefore, must be admitted which destroys the grace and dignity of suffering; the imagination must have an amiable figure to dwell



## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 201

dwell upon ; there are circumstances so ludicrous or disgusting, that no character can preserve a proper decorum under them, or appear in an agreeable light. Who can read the following description of Polypheme without finding his compassion entirely destroyed by aversion and loathing ?

---

His bloody hand  
Snatch'd two unhappy of my martial band,  
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor,  
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore;  
Torn limb from limb he spreads his horrid feast,  
And fierce devours it like a mountain beast,  
He sucks the marrow and the blood he drains,  
Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.

Or that of Scylla,

In the wide dungeon she devours her food,  
And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.

Deformity

Deformity is always disgusting, and the imagination cannot reconcile it with the idea of a favourite character; therefore the poet and romance-writer are fully justified in giving a larger share of beauty to their principal figures than is usually met with in common life. A late genius indeed, in a whimsical mood, gave us a lady with her nose crushed for the heroine of his story; but the circumstance spoils the picture; and though in the course of the story it is kept a good deal out of sight, whenever it does recur to the imagination we are hurt and disgusted. It was an heroic instance of virtue in the nuns of a certain abbey, who cut off their noses and lips to avoid violation; yet this would make a very bad subject for a poem or a play. Something akin to this is the representation of any thing unnatural; of which kind is the famous story of the Roman charity, and for this reason

I can-

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 203

I cannot but think it an unpleasing subject for either the pen or the pencil.

POVERTY, if truly represented, shocks our nicer feelings; therefore whenever it is made use of to awaken our compassion, the rags and dirt, the squalid appearance and mean employments incident to that state must be kept out of sight, and the distress must arise from the idea of depression, and the shock of falling from higher fortunes. We do not pity Belisarius as a poor blind beggar; and a painter would succeed very ill who should sink him to the meanness of that condition. He must let us still discover the conqueror of the Vandals, the general of the imperial armies, or we shall be little interested. Let us look at the picture of the old woman in Otway;

———— A wrinkled hag with age grown double,  
Picking dry sticks, and muttering to herself;  
Her eyes with scalding rheum were gall'd and red;  
Cold palsie shook her head; her hands seem'd wither'd;  
And on her crooked shoulder had she wrapt  
The tatter'd remnant of an old strip'd hanging,  
Which serv'd to keep her carcase from the cold;  
So there was nothing of a piece about her.

Here is the extreme of wretchedness, and instead of melting into pity we turn away with aversion. Indeed the author only intended it to strike horror. But how different are the sentiments we feel for the lovely Belvidera! We see none of those circumstances which render poverty an unamiable thing. When the goods are seized by an execution, our attention is turned to *the piles of massy plate, and all the antient most domestic ornaments*, which imply grandeur and consequence; or to such instances of their hard fortune as will lead us to pity them as lovers: we are struck

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 205

struck and affected with the general face of ruin, but we are not brought near enough to discern the ugliness of its features. Belvidera ruined, Belvidera deprived of friends, without a home, abandoned to the wide world—we can contemplate with all the pleasing sympathy of pity; but had she been represented as really sunk into low life, had we seen her employed in the most servile offices of poverty, our compassion would have given way to contempt and disgust. Indeed, we may observe in real life that poverty is only pitied so long as people can keep themselves from the effects of it. When in common language we say *a miserable object*, we mean an object of distress which, if we relieve, we turn away from at the same time. To make pity pleasing, the object of it must not in any view be disagreeable to the imagination. How admirably has the  
author

author of *Clarissa* managed this point? Amidst scenes of suffering which rend the heart, in poverty, in a prison, under the most shocking outrages, the grace and delicacy of her character never suffers even for a moment: there seems to be a charm about her which prevents her receiving a stain from any thing which happens; and *Clarissa*, abandoned and undone, is the object not only of complacence but veneration.

I would likewise observe, that if an author would have us feel a strong degree of compassion, his characters must not be too perfect. The stern fortitude and inflexible resolution of a *Cato* may command esteem, but does not excite tenderness; and faultless rectitude of conduct, though no rigour be mixed with it, is of too sublime a nature to inspire compassion. Virtue has a kind of self-sufficiency;

ciency ; it stands upon its own basis, and cannot be injured by any violence. It must therefore be mixed with something of helplessness and imperfection, with an excessive sensibility, or a simplicity bordering upon weakness, before it raises, in any great degree, either tenderness or familiar love. If there be a fault in the masterly performance just now mentioned, it is that the character of Clarissa is so inflexibly right, her passions are under such perfect command, and her prudence is so equal to every occasion, that she seems not to need that sympathy we should bestow upon one of a less elevated character : and perhaps we should feel a livelier emotion of tenderness for Lovelace's Rose-bud, but that the story of Clarissa is so worked up by the strength of colouring and the force of repeated impressions, as to command all our sorrow.

PITY

PITY seems too degrading a sentiment to be offered at the shrine of faultless excellence. The sufferings of martyrs are rather beheld with admiration and sympathetic triumph than with tears; and we never feel much for those whom we consider as themselves raised above common feelings.

THE last rule I shall insist upon is, that scenes of distress should not be too long continued. All our finer feelings are in a manner momentary, and no art can carry them beyond a certain point, either in intenseness or duration. Constant suffering deadens the heart to tender impressions; as we may observe in sailors, and others who are grown callous by a life of continual hardships. It is therefore highly necessary in a long work to relieve the mind by scenes of pleasure and gaiety: and I cannot think it so absurd



furd a practice as our modern delicacy has represented it, to intermix wit and fancy with the pathetic, provided care be taken not to check the passions while they are flowing. The transition from a pleasurable state of mind to tender sorrow is not so difficult as we imagine. When the mind is opened by gay and agreeable scenes, every impression is felt more sensibly. Persons of a lively temper are much more susceptible of that sudden swell of sensibility which occasions tears, than those of a grave and saturnine cast: for this reason women are more easily moved to weeping than men. Those who have touched the springs of pity with the finest hand have mingled light strokes of pleasantry and mirth in their most pathetic passages. Very different is the conduct of many novel writers, who by plunging us into scenes of distress without end or limit, exhaust the powers,

P

and

and before the conclusion either render us insensible to every thing, or fix a real sadness upon the mind. The uniform stile of tragedies is one reason why they affect so little. In our old plays all the force of language is reserved for the more interesting parts; and in the scenes of common life there is no attempt to rise above common language: whereas we, by that pompous manner and affected solemnity which we think it necessary to preserve through the whole piece, lose the force of an elevated or passionate expression where the occasion really suggests it.

HAVING thus considered the manner in which fictitious distress must be managed to render it pleasing, let us reflect a little upon the moral tendency of such representations. Much has been said in favour of them, and they are generally  
thought



tion, if they do not lead to action, grow less and less vivid every time they recur, till at length the mind grows absolutely callous. The being affected with a pathetic story is undoubtedly a sign of an amiable disposition, but perhaps no means of increasing it. On the contrary, young people, by a course of this kind of reading, often acquire something of that apathy and indifference which the experience of real life would have given them, without its advantages.

ANOTHER reason why plays and romances do not improve our humanity is, that they lead us to require a certain elegance of manners and delicacy of virtue which is not often found with poverty, ignorance, and meanness. The objects of pity in romance are as different from those in real life as our husbandmen from  
the

## CONCERNING DISTRESS, &c. 213

the shepherds of Arcadia; and a girl who will sit weeping the whole night at the delicate distresses of a lady Charlotte or lady Julia, shall be little moved at the complaint of her neighbour, who, in a homely phrase and vulgar accent, laments to her that she is not able to get bread for her family. Romance-writers likewise make great misfortunes so familiar to our ears, that we have hardly any pity to spare for the common accidents of life: but we ought to remember, that misery has a claim to relief, however we may be disgusted with its appearance; and that we must not fancy ourselves charitable, when we are only pleasing our imagination.

It would perhaps be better, if our romances were more like those of the old stamp, which tended to raise human nature, and inspire a certain grace and dig-

nity of manners of which we have hardly the idea. The high notions of honour, the wild and fanciful spirit of adventure and romantic love, elevated the mind; our novels tend to depress and enfeeble it. Yet there is a species of this kind of writing which must ever afford an exquisite pleasure to persons of taste and sensibility; where noble sentiments are mixed with well fancied incidents, pathetic touches with dignity and grace, and invention with chaste correctness. Such will ever interest our sweetest passions. I shall conclude this paper with the following tale.

IN

---

**I**N the happy period of the golden age, when all the celestial inhabitants descended to the earth, and conversed familiarly with mortals, among the most cherished of the heavenly powers were twins, the offspring of Jupiter, LOVE and joy. Wherever they appeared, the flowers sprung up beneath their feet, the sun shone with a brighter radiance, and all nature seemed embellished by their presence. They were inseparable companions, and their growing attachment was favoured by Jupiter, who had decreed that a lasting union should be solemnized between them so soon as they were arrived at maturer years. But in the mean<sup>v</sup> time the sons of men deviated

from their native innocence; vice and ruin over-ran the earth with giant strides; and Astrea with her train of celestial visitants forsook their polluted abodes. Love alone remained, having been stolen away by Hope, who was his nurse, and conveyed by her to the forests of Arcadia, where he was brought up among the shepherds. But Jupiter assigned him a different partner, and commanded him to espouse SORROW, the daughter of Até. He complied with reluctance; for her features were harsh and disagreeable, her eyes sunk, her forehead contracted into perpetual wrinkles, and her temples were covered with a wreath of cypress and wormwood. From this union sprung a virgin, in whom might be traced a strong resemblance to both her parents; but the fullen and unamiable features of her mother were so mixed



mixed and blended with the sweetness of her father, that her countenance, though mournful, was highly pleasing. The maids and shepherds of the neighbouring plains gathered round and called her PITY. A red-breast was observed to build in the cabin where she was born; and while she was yet an infant, a dove pursued by a hawk flew into her bosom. This nymph had a dejected appearance, but so soft and gentle a mien that she was beloved to a degree of enthusiasm. Her voice was low and plaintive, but inexpressibly sweet; and she loved to lie for hours together on the banks of some wild and melancholy stream, singing to her lute. She taught men to weep, for she took a strange delight in tears; and often, when the virgins of the hamlet were assembled at their evening sports, she would steal in amongst them, and

captivate

captivate their hearts by her tales full of a charming sadness. She wore on her head a garland composed of her father's myrtles twisted with her mother's cypresses.

ONE day, as she sat musing by the waters of Helicon, her tears by chance fell into the fountain; and ever since, the Muses' spring has retained a strong taste of the infusion. Pity was commanded by Jupiter to follow the steps of her mother through the world, dropping balm into the wounds she made, and binding up the hearts she had broken. She follows with her hair loose, her bosom bare and throbbing, her garments torn by the briars, and her feet bleeding with the roughness of the path. The nymph is mortal, for her mother is so; and when she has fulfilled her destined

destined course upon the earth, they shall both expire together, and LOVE be again united to JOY, his immortal and long betrothed bride.

T H E E N D.







**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET**

---

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY**

---

